

# **THE INTEGRATION OF DISPERSED ASYLUM SEEKERS IN GLASGOW**

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that this thesis is of my own composition, based on my own work, with acknowledgement of other sources, and has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Alexandra Rosenberg

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# **ABSTRACT**

This thesis is an analysis of the integration of dispersed asylum seekers in Glasgow. It is a qualitative case study that uses data from participant observation with community groups, interviews with asylum seekers and those involved in service provision and policy, and documentary analysis. It examines the impact of policy within a local context, and the difficulties of defining and promoting integration for asylum seekers. The research makes both an empirical and theoretical contribution, building on the knowledge of the impact of dispersal and asylum policy, with a Scottish perspective analysing the issues when implementing reserved asylum policy within a devolved context. The research contributes to debates on integration with an analysis of the conceptual and practical difficulties of promoting integration for asylum seekers. The research findings are structured around three key analytic themes, the impact of policy on asylum seekers and other stakeholders, defining and promoting integration, and challenges.

The research indicates tensions between devolved and reserved responsibilities in relation to asylum. The different approaches to integration create difficulties for those working within devolved services, but implementing a reserved policy. Promoting integration for asylum seekers is seen as beneficial for both asylum seekers and host communities in Scotland, but there are both conceptual and practical challenges. There are difficulties of how far and in what ways temporary integration can be measured, which are analysed in relation to existing frameworks for integration. Practice related debates have formed the basis of a shift to a more strategic platform for integration work. Contexts and procedures continue to change, however, bringing fresh challenges. The concept of social capital has been influential in the structures that have been set up to facilitate the processes of integration and dispersal within Glasgow. Yet there are difficulties with the usage of a social capital based framework. Whilst social capital is a useful concept, there is a risk that its usage may mask issues of inequality and exclusion, and the fundamental difficulties of the asylum process remain.



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

A8	Countries which joined the EU in May 2004: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia
ATLAS	Action on Teaching and Learning for Asylum Seekers
BIA	Borders and Immigration Agency
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
CRASC	Cosla Refugee and Asylum Seekers Consortium
ECRE	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
EU	European Union
FFD	Framework for Dialogue
GASSP	Glasgow Asylum Seeker Support Project
GCC	Glasgow City Council
IAA	Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
ILR	Indefinite Leave to Remain
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NAM	New Asylum Model
NASS	National Asylum Support Service
RCO	Refugee Community Organisation
ROA	Regeneration Outcome Agreement
RPF	Refugee Policy Forum
RSIN	Refugee Settlement and Integration Networks
SMP	Strategic Migration Partnership

SRC	Scottish Refugee Council
SRIF	Scottish Refugee Integration Forum
SSCG	Scottish Strategic Co-ordination Group
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking children
UK	United Kingdom
UNCHR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WRS	Worker Registration Scheme

# 1. INTRODUCTION

This thesis analyses the integration of dispersed asylum seekers in Glasgow, taking into account different experiences of dispersal and integration, and drawing on the perspectives of asylum seekers, and those working in the community, in services and in policy. It is a qualitative case study that examines the impact of policy within a local context and the difficulties of defining and promoting integration. This introduction sets out the aims of the thesis, provides background on asylum policy in the UK to contextualise the research, indicates the key research problems and the findings in relation to these, and outlines the structure of the thesis by providing a brief summary of each chapter.

## 1.1 THE AIMS OF THE THESIS

The aim of the research was to examine the dispersal process in Glasgow, using the different experiences of those involved in order to understand the impact of asylum policy. A further aim was to analyse the conceptual and practical difficulties associated with the concept of integration, and to consider what the response to these problems has been in Glasgow. The final aim was to consider the utility of social capital in analysing integration and asylum policy.

These aims were operationalised through three research questions; the development of which is discussed further in Chapters 2 and 3. The research questions are:

1. *What are the experiences of those living and working in dispersal areas within Glasgow and how do these enable us to evaluate asylum policy?*
2. *In what ways is integration a problematic concept and how has this been addressed in Glasgow?*
3. *Are concepts such as social capital a useful tool in analysing asylum dispersal and community relations?*

These questions are of interest for a number of reasons. As set out in Section 1.2 below, asylum is a highly topical and politically sensitive area. Crotty (1998: 13) notes that research typically starts with a real-life issue that needs to be addressed, a problem that needs to be solved or a question that needs to be answered. Asylum is an area that has been a repeated subject of legislation, and there have been significant systemic changes since the early 1990s. The development of the legislation is summarised below and discussed further in Chapters 2 and 4. The research deals with a vulnerable group who are seeking protection. Understanding the operation and impact of the system is therefore of great importance. Due to their temporary status and the circumstances leading to their migration, asylum seekers are amongst the most marginalised groups in society. Although they have been resourceful enough to escape from potentially life threatening situations, they are prevented from fully using their own skills and resources to support themselves in the United Kingdom (UK). The responses to supporting asylum seekers at the local, Scottish and UK levels are indicative of broader trends in how society responds to the challenges of incorporating disadvantaged groups.

Glasgow is the only city in Scotland which agreed an accommodation contract for dispersed asylum seekers with the Home Office, and it also houses the largest number of asylum seekers within any one local authority in the UK. It therefore forms an important context for gaining a detailed understanding of the impact of the asylum and dispersal processes. Focusing the research within Glasgow also brings in the added dimension of the interaction between devolved and reserved responsibilities. In addition, my personal interest in the research was shaped by living in Glasgow during the early stages of dispersal, and becoming aware of the policy through the reporting of the problems in the city and protests which took place regarding support for asylum seekers. Although I moved away from Glasgow to undertake postgraduate study in London in late 2001, my MSc in Violence, Conflict and Development included an *Introduction to Refugee Studies* course, thus providing a greater understanding of forced migration to contextualise the events in Glasgow. Knowledge of the conflict situations from which many asylum seekers are fleeing also contributed to my desire to understand how asylum policy affects those who are subject to it, and to be able to carry out research that may be able to contribute to

policy development. This research therefore combines an interest arising from local circumstances with academic interests developed during an earlier stage of postgraduate study.

Based on the research questions above, a number of choices were made regarding the appropriate research strategies. The importance of context in understanding the impact of policy was clear from both the literature and the policy itself. As discussed in Chapter 3, a qualitative research strategy allows both context and experience to be emphasised. Combining participant observation, interviews and documents provided data from different angles on the dispersal process, and on the different responses that have emerged. Participant observation with community groups provided first-hand insight into integration work and facilitated the development of long-term relations with asylum seekers who had been dispersed and those working to support them. The interviews not only supplemented this data, but added the experiences and views of those working in policy and strategic roles, and built on the data gathered from the analysis of policy documents. The thematic analysis of this data, both manually and using NVivo, led to the emergence of three key analytic themes: the impact of policy on target groups and stakeholders<sup>1</sup>; defining and promoting integration, and challenges, which incorporates A8 migration and the restructuring of integration funding. Following some discussion of the background and context for this research, the ways in which these themes are addressed throughout the thesis are indicated by outlining the thesis structure and contents.

## **1.2 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT**

Whilst the focus of the research is on the impact of asylum and dispersal policy within Glasgow, this has to be understood within the broader context of the development of immigration policy in the UK. Key trends are summarised in this section, prior to an in-depth critical analysis in the literature review in Chapter 2 and the policy analysis in Chapter 4.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Target group' refers to asylum seekers as the main focus of asylum legislation, whilst stakeholders refers to all those who have an interest in the operations of dispersal.

There have been four major pieces of asylum legislation since Labour was first elected in 1997. Although asylum has been a recent high-profile subject of political attention, the legal framework emerged only relatively recently with the first primary legislation on asylum in 1993. Sales (2007: 131) argues that there have been four major (overlapping) phases in the development of UK immigration policy:

- The control of European (mainly Jewish) immigration (from 1905 up to and after the Second World War)
- Controls on new (black) Commonwealth immigration (1960s onwards)
- Controls on asylum seekers (late 1980s onwards)
- Managed migration: greater selectivity in labour migration, stricter controls on asylum seekers (2000 onwards)

Table 1 indicates the development of immigration and asylum policy in more detail, setting out key points from British immigration legislation, particularly those pertaining to asylum.

**Table 1 British Immigration Legislation – Key Points**

LEGISLATION	KEY POINTS
1905 Aliens Act	Excluded ‘undesirable aliens’ who could not support themselves
1919 Aliens Restriction Act	Consolidation of deportation powers of the Home Secretary
1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act	Introduced ‘entry vouchers’ on basis of skills and qualifications
1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act	Distinguished those UK passport holders with the right of abode
1971 Immigration Act	Set out structure of immigration control, Home Secretary given power to make immigration rules
1981 British Nationality Act	Those with right of abode given citizenship, children of non-nationals lose automatic right to citizenship
1987 Carriers’ Liability Act	Introduced fines on airlines carrying passengers without the correct documents
1988 Immigration Act	Made deportation easier, withdrew right of family reunion from Commonwealth men, established ‘primary purpose’ marriage rule
1993 Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act	Required compatibility with Geneva Convention, created processes for dealing with asylum applications
1996 Asylum and Immigration Act	Withdrew non-contributory benefits for asylum seekers and others subject to immigration control
1999 Immigration and Asylum Act	Created separate asylum seeker support system,

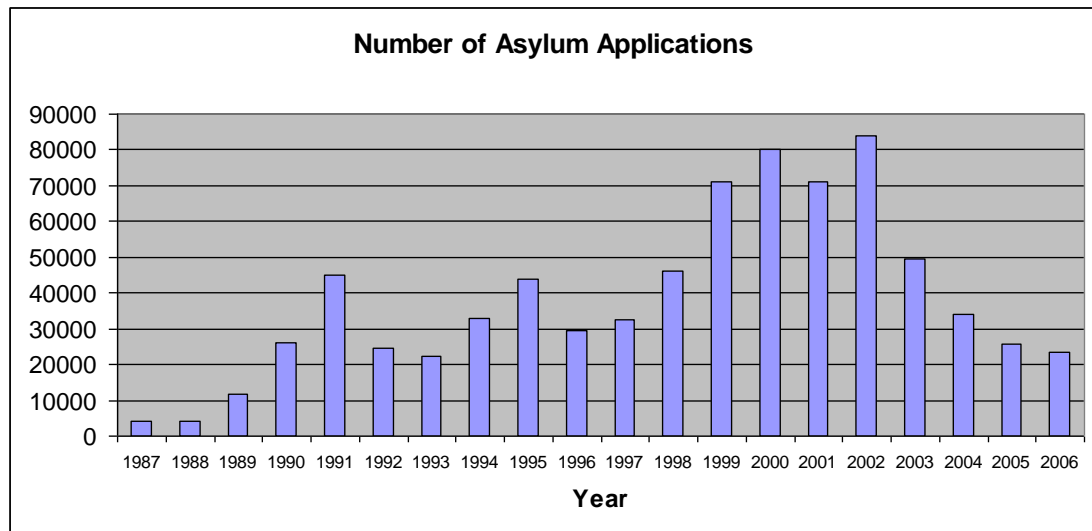
	and reformed appeal system, imposed duty on marriage registrars to report suspicious marriages, strengthened enforcement powers of immigration officers, extended carrier sanctions, imposed regulation of immigration advice
2002 Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act	Introduced new controls on entry, citizenship pledge, limited powers of Immigration Appeals Tribunals to hear appeals on human rights grounds
2004 Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc) Act	Reformed appeal system, made entering the UK without a valid passport a criminal offence
2006 Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act	Increased grounds for depriving dual nationals of citizenship, reduced right to appeal, increased role of employers in preventing illegal working

*Source:* Adapted from Sales (2007: 133-134)

As the table indicates, concerns to exert control over entry and citizenship rights have been prevalent throughout the development of immigration legislation. Concerns over welfare and public costs are also recurrent from 1905 through to the exclusion of asylum seekers from the mainstream social security system in 1996 and the creation of a separate system in 1999. The literature analysing asylum policy is reviewed in Chapter 2, and recent asylum legislation and the concerns and responses which this has invoked are analysed in Chapter 4, which also takes into account the responses within Glasgow and Scotland.

A number of factors have been suggested for the increasing concern over asylum and immigration including the insecurities of globalisation and the war on terror (Sales, 2007), and the perceived challenges to national identity and threat to the welfare state (Schuster, 2003). Immigration and asylum are often conflated and research on attitudes towards asylum indicates a lack of public understanding of the issues (Crawley, 2005). Policy both responds to and shapes public understandings and attitudes towards asylum, and the negative terms of the policy discourse have an impact on the reception and integration experiences of asylum seekers. One key factor in the increasing focus on asylum, and the emphasis on greater control and deterrence, was the rising number of asylum applications from the late 1980s, as indicated in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Applications Received for Asylum, Excluding Dependents, by Year of Application 1987 - 2006**



*Sources:* 1987 – 1996 Home Office Statistical Bulletin *Asylum Statistics, United Kingdom 1997* Issue 14/98. 1997 – 2003 Home Office Statistical Bulletin *Asylum Statistics United Kingdom 2003* Issue 11/04. 2003-2006 provisional figures from Home Office Statistical Bulletin *Asylum Statistics United Kingdom 2006*. Issue 14/07. Actual figures provided from 1989 onwards are rounded to the nearest five.

As Sales (2007: 145) argues, this increase in numbers was used as evidence of an ‘asylum problem’ by those seeking further controls. At the same time there were also shifts in the ways in which people were accessing the asylum process, with most of those arriving being spontaneous asylum seekers, by contrast to the earlier arrival of refugees through resettlement programmes responding to different crises. Bloch and Schuster (2002, p. 456) argue that legislation in the 1990s increasingly tied asylum to the issue of welfare provision, fuelling the idea of asylum seekers as a ‘burden’. Asylum legislation removed access to the mainstream social security system, setting up a separate system of support which has emphasised the dependent nature of asylum seekers. The introduction of compulsory dispersal for those asylum seekers unable to support themselves made asylum an issue in areas with little previous experience of receiving refugees or of ethnic minority settlement. The system was intended to distribute the costs of supporting asylum seekers more evenly and relieve the costs for local authorities in the South East of England. Previous dispersal schemes, although limited to particular national groups who had arrived through



resettlement programmes, indicated the difficulties of having accommodation-led programmes and the need for supportive media coverage and informed communities. A hostile political climate, increasing restrictions, and the potential isolation of asylum seekers from support systems, have raised concerns over the impact of the asylum system and of dispersal both on asylum seekers and those working with them. It is therefore important to understand the responses to asylum policy and dispersal, within the local context which shapes these responses, and the impact of policy trends towards restriction and deterrence for asylum seekers and service providers. This brief summary of the policy background indicates the key problems operationalised in the research questions above relating to the impacts of policy, understanding integration and the usefulness of social capital. The thesis outline below explains further how these problems are addressed throughout this thesis.

## **1.3 THESIS OUTLINE**

### **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

The review focuses on key areas within asylum and integration research, and discusses their importance in formulating the research questions and conducting the research. The areas discussed are: asylum policy research, multiculturalism and integration, and social capital. Analyses of the asylum policy framework, and its development and impact are discussed, with particular attention given to dispersal policy. Previous work within the Scottish context is noted. The asylum policy framework has important implications for integration, the second area of discussion. Integration literature is set within the broader framework of debates on multiculturalism. Definitions and frameworks, and policies for measuring and promoting integration are discussed, and linked to the problem of how these might be applied within a context of temporary integration for asylum seekers. Finally, some key works on social capital are reviewed. The definitions and debates are discussed, the different forms of social capital noted and the implications of using the concept within integration work considered. This critical review aims to highlight a number

of interesting and problematic issues, and where and how these issues have been dealt with in the thesis.

### **Chapter 3: Research Design and Practice**

This chapter provides a reflexive discussion of the research design, data collection and data analysis employed throughout this research, considering the choices made and acknowledging their strengths and weaknesses. As is appropriate for a sensitive and politicised research area, ethical concerns are given consideration throughout, rather than being restricted to a separate section. The chapter deals with research design as an ongoing process, data collection, and data analysis and presentation. The research questions are discussed and the reasons for a qualitative case study of Glasgow set out. Changes from the original research design over the course of the fieldwork are noted. The data collection process is then discussed in depth, including the difficulties of researching hard-to-reach populations. Issues of access, consent, ethical concerns, and the types of data generated are discussed in relation to each of the methods used: participant observation, semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis. Data analysis is then discussed, considering starting points, analytic frameworks, and the use of NVivo. Approaches to dealing with the difficult questions of anonymity, confidentiality and the selection and attribution of quotations are also discussed.

### **Chapter 4: Reserved Policy in a Devolved Context**

Chapter 4 sets out the key features of legislation and policy and evaluates how these policies affect the experiences of those working to support asylum seekers. The effects on asylum seekers themselves are discussed primarily in Chapter 6. Implementation of asylum policy in Scotland is complicated by the intersection of reserved immigration policy with the provision of devolved services to asylum seekers. The distinctiveness of the Scottish context and approach, with a more inclusive approach to integration, therefore has to be taken into account in analysing the impact of asylum policy. Important trends and developments in the UK

framework of asylum policy and legislation are discussed, noting a shift of emphasis towards enforcement and deterrence. The recent implementation and impact of the New Asylum Model, which aims to greatly speed up the asylum decision-making process is reviewed. The responses to asylum at the Scottish and Glasgow based levels are set out and the interaction between the reserved and devolved levels are analysed. Working relationships and areas of tension between the Scottish and UK level approaches are noted, using examples such as dawn raids and different approaches to education. The chapter analyses how the reserved/devolved balance relates to asylum and its effects on stakeholders.

## **Chapter 5: Promoting Integration: A multifaceted process**

The aim of this chapter is to examine the experiences of asylum seekers and service providers involved in the integration process. This chapter shifts the focus from policy to practice by discussing different strategies and challenges for integration. The first section considers some of the different ways, or routes, by which integration can be promoted, taking into account the ways in which service providers define integration. Two specific examples are then discussed; language acquisition, and user involvement and participation. The second section examines the ways in which asylum seekers are able to access integration support, looking at both formal and informal networks of support including drop-ins and other groups. The final section returns to the context for integration looking at experiences of living in Glasgow, and utilises recent research on Scottish attitudes to asylum. An important thread running throughout the chapter is the subjective and multi-faceted nature of the integration process.

## **Chapter 6: Dealing with the Asylum Process**

The asylum process presents a number of difficulties for those involved: dealing with the system, potentially lengthy delays before receiving a decision, and responding to the outcome whether positive or negative. The chapter covers three separate but related aspects of the asylum process, changing needs, waiting for a decision and the

end of the process. The impacts of the process on all those involved are considered. The focus is primarily on grassroots experiences, which complements the strategic focus of the discussion in Chapter 4. The first section considers the ways in which forms of support change over time and at different stages of the process. Changes arising from shifts in policy and process are also noted, including the broader distribution of asylum seekers around the city and the ongoing legacy case review. The period spent waiting for a decision presents many challenges both practical and emotional, and the difficulties of finding meaningful activity, the impacts of limbo and family dynamics are discussed. The final section considers possible outcomes to the asylum process, both negative and positive, and examines the issues of destitution, removals and moving on.

## **Chapter 7: Challenges: Old problems and new contexts**

Within a difficult policy environment and the broader problems of integration, there are some specific challenges which are important to consider. These issues are both asylum specific and existing issues that are intensified in the context of asylum policy. The discussion covers: the challenges of funding and the move to a more strategic approach to integration, the impact of European (A8) migration, and strengths and weaknesses in asylum support. A number of recent changes have led to greater scrutiny of the ways in which funding is provided including, the transition to the new accommodation contract, the ending of some funding streams and other policy changes such as the legacy review. A further important contextual change has arisen from the enlargement of the European Union (EU), and the arrival of large numbers of economic migrants from the A8 countries. A8 migration has changed the context for integration work in Glasgow and increased demands for certain services. It presents another challenge for resources and strategies for integration. The background and levels of A8 migration, the service implications and integration issues are discussed. The analysis of challenges concludes with a consideration of strengths and weaknesses in support for asylum seekers, including partnership working, childcare and the different working environment in Scotland.

## **Chapter 8: Evaluating Integration in the Scottish Context**

This chapter returns to the difficulties with integration, including problems with available indicators, the temporary status of asylum seekers, and the complexity of facilitating integration. Both empirical and theoretical perspectives are used to provide an evaluation of integration in the Scottish context. There are three sections that deal with: the problems of integration in a temporary context, the social capital framework, and whether the work in Glasgow can be considered as a model for integration. Temporary status presents a paradox for integration, as removal always remains a possible outcome, and asylum policy places a number of restrictions on potential activities and indicators for integration. Integration policy and practice frequently draw on social capital based terminology, particularly in the emphasis on building bridges, bonds and links. The applications of social capital to integration are discussed, including the advantages and disadvantages of a social capital approach. Finally, integration work in Glasgow is reviewed, considering the extent of its success, whether it can be considered as a model for integration practice, and the implications for policy and practice. The issues raised in the empirical analysis of integration and the impact of policy are linked back to conceptual debates around integration and social capital, to provide an overall analysis of integration in the Scottish context.

Table 3 summarises the relations between the research questions, analytic themes and thesis chapters.

**Table 3: Analytic Themes and Research Questions within the Thesis**

<b>Analytic Theme</b>	<b>Research Question(s)</b>	<b>Chapter(s)</b>
The impact of policy on target groups and stakeholders	1	4: Reserved Policy in a Devolved Context 6: Dealing with the Asylum Process
Defining and promoting integration	2	5: Promoting Integration: A multi-faceted process 8: Evaluating Integration in the Scottish Context
Challenges	1 2 3	7: Challenges: Old problems and new contexts 8: Evaluating Integration in the Scottish Context

Overall, this thesis presents a qualitative case study of the processes of dispersal and integration in Glasgow. It draws on research with asylum seekers, service providers and policy makers to analyse the impacts of dispersal and the issue of integration. The findings are focused around the key analytic themes relating to the impacts of policy, integration and challenges. It is argued that, within a difficult policy context, many positive achievements have been made in Glasgow towards supporting and integrating asylum seekers.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Asylum and integration are complex subjects, studies of which are drawn from several disciplines, and are often cross-disciplinary. This review focuses on key issues and discusses their importance in shaping and justifying the research design employed in this research. The aim is to analyse the existing literature, which this thesis both draws on and expands, and to highlight key issues that helped to frame the research questions and shape the analysis. The discussion indicates where the issues raised are addressed in the thesis, and is structured into a number of different sections dealing with: asylum policy research, multiculturalism and integration, and social capital. Within each section there are a number of different strands. Asylum policy research covers analyses of the legal framework, and its development and impact. Dispersal policy is then discussed in more depth, noting both structural issues and the impact of dispersal on asylum seekers and service providers. Previous work which has been carried out in the Scottish context is analysed. The asylum policy framework has important implications for integration, both in setting the context and in affecting the experiences of asylum seekers.

Integration forms the first part of the broader conceptual framework for the research and is the second area of literature discussed. Multiculturalism is discussed briefly in the introduction to the integration section, due to its role in shaping policy. Although it is an important concept in its own right, it is considered here only to the extent to which it shapes debates over integration. The broader framework of multiculturalism also allows issues such as new European (A8) migration, which have changed the integration context, to be discussed. The common features amongst different definitions of integration are discussed and linked to the problem of the temporary nature of integration for asylum seekers. The second part of the broader conceptual framework for the research is social capital, which has become prominent in literature and debates on social cohesion and integration. The definitions and

debates are reviewed, the different forms of social capital noted and the implications of using the concept within integration work considered. This critical review aims to highlight a number of interesting and problematic issues, and indicates where and how these have been approached within the thesis.

## **2.1 ASYLUM POLICY RESEARCH**

Research on asylum policy forms the overall background for this research, setting the context, and influencing the research questions. The discussion is broken down into a number of sections to understand the key themes emerging from existing work. These sections comprise: the legal framework, dispersal, and the Scottish context. The issues arising from both the structure and implementation of the asylum system, and its impact on asylum seekers are discussed.

### ***2.1.1 The Legal Framework***

The development of asylum legislation in the UK was outlined briefly in Chapter 1. The relatively late development of a legal framework for asylum, with the first primary legislation in 1993, has been pointed out (Schuster and Solomos, 2001). Since then, however, the development has been rapid, major pieces of legislation were enacted in 1993, 1996, 1999, 2002, 2004 and 2006, the provisions of which are analysed in more detail in Chapter 4. A number of factors were behind both the pace and content of the legislation, including a large increase in the numbers of applicants (see Table 2), the ending of the Cold War, increasing numbers of asylum seekers from Africa and Asia, and debates regarding the future of the welfare state. A number of trends behind these legislative developments have been noted. Schuster (2003) argues that when asylum first appeared in statutory domestic law, the purpose was not just to regulate, but to restrict. There has been an increasing separation of asylum seekers from the mainstream welfare system. Restrictive aims and concerns to reduce numbers and costs have continued to be prevalent, leading to a concern for the potential isolation and marginalisation of asylum seekers. There have been moves



to ensure better access to due process, such as the introduction of appeals, and a requirement for compatibility of legislation with the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. However, legislation has also made legal access to the UK increasingly difficult, through measures such as carriers' liability and the criminalisation of entering the UK without a passport. This is despite a provision in the Geneva Convention that refugees should not be penalised for entering the country illegally.<sup>2</sup> Zetter (2007: 183) argues that state policies and practices effectively criminalise refugees for seeking asylum. The impact of such restrictions, beyond the difficulties created for those seeking asylum, is not clear. Billings (2002: 119) argues that there have only been sporadic and relatively short periods of time when regulatory responses have been successful in terms of reducing the number of claims, while Schuster (2003: 145) suggests that solutions tend to focus on domestic measures without regard to the wider political and economic context.

Schuster and Solomos (2004) argue that, since coming to power in 1997, Labour Party policy on immigration and asylum has shown a great deal of continuity, not only with Conservative policy, but also with regard to the general post-war belief that social cohesion is dependent on limiting and controlling the migration of certain groups into Britain. They argue (2004: 275) that a defining feature of the Labour approach has been the desire both to be tough, and to be seen to be tough. Such an approach has a number of implications for the treatment of asylum seekers, which are discussed, following an analysis of the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act (IAA). This is a key piece of legislation, which established a new support framework, and introduced compulsory dispersal for all asylum seekers unable to support themselves.

By contrast to the continuity suggested above by Schuster and Solomos, Zetter and Pearl (2000: 170) highlight the turbulence of the policy environment of the 1990s, and argue that the IAA represents a radical point of departure. A number of concerns were raised regarding the new systems introduced by the IAA, particularly the introduction of vouchers rather than cash support, and the compulsory dispersal scheme. Dispersal is discussed in more detail below, but among the issues raised is the operation of the system and its impact on asylum

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<sup>2</sup> Article 31 of the Geneva Convention states that contracting states shall not impose penalties, on account of their illegal entry or presence, on refugees, coming directly from territory where their life or freedom was threatened.

seekers. Kelly (2002), for example, describes the IAA as a ‘dangerous experiment’. Billings (2002: 118) argues that, in both the IAA and the 2000 Asylum Support Regulations, the government tried to avoid creating a legal obligation to support asylum seekers. With regard to the voucher system Schuster (2003: 167) argues that it demeaned, marginalised and stigmatised, while Sales (2002: 457) suggests that changes to the social support system made asylum seekers more visible as a group and underlined their dependence on welfare benefits. The IAA illustrates the increasing linking of asylum and welfare highlighted by several commentators (Sales, 2002, Schuster, 2003, Geddes, 2000). Bloch and Schuster (2002: 395) note that the welfare state is a site of both exclusion and inclusion, and that asylum seekers have been at the end of a concerted push towards exclusion from the early 1990s. They further note (2002: 401), however, that the assumption that welfare benefits and legal access to the labour market are strong pull factors is without empirical justification. Robinson and Segrott’s (2002) study of the decision-making of asylum seekers suggests that the principle aim of asylum seekers is to reach a place of safety, and that few had detailed knowledge of UK asylum procedures, entitlement to benefits, or the availability of work in the UK. Schuster (2003) reiterates that restricting welfare is unlikely to act as a deterrent, and will only make it harder for those who have to survive under these conditions.

Further legislative changes have not addressed these existing concerns and have raised new issues. Sales (2005) notes in the context of the White Paper *Secure Borders, Safe Haven* (Home Office, 2002) that there were new restrictions, more continuities than departures and little sign that any concerns had been taken account of, leading to an insecurity that undermines integration. Further changes in the legal framework, such as streamlining appeals and the introduction of the New Asylum Model, have focused on speeding up the pace of decision making and of removals, raising concerns regarding access to due process (Refugee Council, 2002, Thomas, 2003), destitution (Green, 2006, Refugee Action, 2006) and detention (Bloch and Schuster, 2005). These issues concern not only the process of applying for asylum and awaiting an outcome, but often have a direct impact on integration processes, not only through restrictions on asylum seekers’ activities, but also through the impact on public attitudes to asylum seekers, an issue that is addressed further in Section

2.2.3. One effect of the policy discourse has been to emphasise what Sales (2002) discusses under the title 'the deserving and undeserving', suggesting that the terms of the mainstream political debate are predicated on the notion that the majority of asylum seekers are 'bogus' and undeserving of entry. Zetter (2007) notes there has been a proliferation of new labels relating to asylum seekers and refugees, with new categories of temporary protection, and labels such as 'bogus' which stigmatise asylum seekers. He argues (2007: 182) that 'dispersed asylum seeker' is more than a bureaucratic category, but is a label which is imposed, excludes, marginalises, and alienates. The impacts of asylum policy and discourse can also have gendered effects. As Callemard (1999) indicates, a number of legal scholars have highlighted the gender biases of the refugee definition and/or its implementation. Crawley (2000) argues that the difficulties facing many women as asylum seekers stem not from the absence of gender as convention category, but from the failure of decision makers to acknowledge and respond to the gendering of politics and of women's relationship to the state. Work carried out by refugee women (Refugee Women's Strategy Group, 2007) in Glasgow highlighted a number of concerns including the asylum process and legal representation, health, isolation, education and employment, racism and community safety, lack of information, interpreting services, childcare and gender based violence.

The issues raised regarding the legal framework for asylum in the UK have a number of implications for the questions this research seeks to address and the research design adopted. The literature highlights a policy emphasis on restriction and deterrence rather than protection. It is important to understand the impact of policy on asylum seekers themselves and on those working with them. Within the Scottish context there is the further element of the interaction of devolved and reserved responsibilities, which is discussed in more detail in Section 2.1.3, and analysed in Chapters 4 and 8. The legal framework is crucial not only in determining the experiences and outcomes for asylum seekers, but also in shaping the overall climate and possibilities for integration. Williams (2006: 866) suggests that one effect of the prevailing policy ethos around deterrence is to further threaten relationships of trust among refugees, refugee communities and host communities. Issues around implementation, further changes in legislation and coping strategies

underline the importance of the key analytic themes addressed in the research on the impact of policy on target groups and stakeholders, and defining and promoting integration. Within the overall policy framework, the research is framed around experiences of dealing with dispersal. A case study of Glasgow is used to understand these experiences in more depth, and the interaction between responses at different levels, both at an individual level and at a more strategic structural level. Dispersal itself is now considered in more depth, prior to a discussion of research relating to the Scottish context.

### ***2.1.2 Dispersal***

As indicated above, the introduction of compulsory dispersal for asylum seekers was an important shift in asylum policy and support. There are several important points that can be drawn from the examples of previous dispersal, such as those for Ugandan Asians (Robinson et al., 2003), Vietnamese (Robinson et al., 2003), Bosnians (Robinson and Coleman, 2000) and Kosovans (Gibney, 1999, Scottish Refugee Council, 2000). The examples highlight the importance of finding appropriate locations (determined not just by the availability of housing), of community development, and of a positive media portrayal of the refugees in order to engage public sympathy and support, all issues that arose again in relation to the dispersal scheme introduced under the IAA.

There have been a number of specific studies of the IAA dispersal framework (for example: Audit Commission, 2000, Boswell, 2001, Robinson et al., 2003), which have looked at its implementation, the operation of the system, the impact on asylum seekers, and responses within dispersal locations. Prioritising the availability of accommodation was emphasised as problematic, and the Audit Commission (2000) found that the scheme was driven by a need to reduce costs. It was further suggested that there are hidden costs in the ever changing national framework, which have to be met locally (Audit Commission, 2000: 14). Boswell (2001: 25) noted that asylum seekers have tended to be sent to areas with a ready supply of inexpensive housing without full consideration of other criteria such as the existence of ethnic

communities or the availability of adequate support. Dispersal often means that asylum seekers are isolated from personal contacts, and community and refugee networks that are otherwise an important source of support (Boswell, 2001: 18). Zetter et al. (2005: 172) found that the dearth of associational structures in dispersed locations was particularly problematic for ethnic groups that were new to the UK. Furthermore, there was a lack of public funding to support the formation of new community organisations, and those in the regions tended to be informal, non-institutionalised and marginalised (Zetter et al., 2005: 173ff). Integration, networks and sources of support for asylum seekers are addressed as part of the wider discussion of integration in Chapter 5. Boswell (2001) also questioned whether dispersal met its aims of reducing social tensions in relation to supporting asylum seekers, as research suggests that, while it may ease tensions in the areas from which people are dispersed, it usually creates far more acute problems in the new receiving areas. Responses to dispersal in the new receiving areas are crucial, highlighting the importance of a context-based study in a dispersal location.

In addition to the difficulties created for asylum seekers, the operation of the system was also problematic. One issue was the centralised nature of decision making. Kelly (2002: 3) argues that no allowance was made for the fact that the creation of the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) would reduce the capacity of local authorities and refugee agencies to plan and prepare. Dawson (2002: 10) argues that research in the early stages of dispersal found that it failed in its central aims of burden sharing, control and deterrence, but also raises the question of the extent to which problems were part of the process of implementation and therefore transitional. He argues (2002: 12) that the root of many problems was the speed at which new structures were implemented and at which systems for provision had to be set up, often with poor information and communication. There was also a marked contrast in quality between local authority and private housing providers. However, his research suggests that many of the problems with dispersal policy and its implementation were transitional, and that there was an increasingly higher quality of welfare in the dispersal sites, although a great deal of work still needed to be done. Important issues therefore, are changes over time, both in local structures and in central-local relations. Work carried out by the Home Office (Anie et al., 2005) to

explore factors affecting successful dispersal, indicated a need for an increased role for local knowledge in the selection of dispersal areas; the need for better communication between NASS, stakeholders and asylum seekers; the importance of the socio-economic characteristics of dispersal areas; and a concern over variations in standards of accommodation and support services, although the exploratory nature of the research was also acknowledged.

It is important to consider the extent to which issues relating to the implementation and ongoing responses to dispersal are generic difficulties with the system, and the extent to which the circumstances of the receiving areas can lead to distinctive outcomes. This is particularly important in the case of Glasgow, given that the reserved asylum policy is being implemented within a devolved context, which is discussed further below in relation to the Scottish context. The centralised nature of NASS, and the housing of asylum seekers in deprived areas due to the availability of housing stock, are common features identified in the difficulties with dispersal. Anie et al. (2005, p.2) found that variation in standards of accommodation and support services were often attributed to difference in the details of NASS contracts with different providers. Housing standards, particularly from private landlords, were a problematic issue. Robinson (2003, p.137), notes that the Refugee Council amongst others claimed that the government was using inappropriate and inadequate housing. Glasgow was different in this respect with no private landlords involved in the original dispersal contract. Several location specific studies, such as of Hull (Dawson, 2002), West Yorkshire (Wilson, 2002; cited in Robinson, 2003, p.138) and Nottingham (Stansfield, 2001; cited in Robinson, 2003, p.140) highlight the issues noted above: lack of local consultation and information sharing, and the potential for creating social tensions in the new reception areas. However, improvements and developments in local services were also noted. Griffiths et al. (2005) look at the impact of dispersal in the North West and in the West Midlands, and local authority's strategy, policy and practice in coping with new arrivals. They note that both areas have significant concentrations of deprivation and poverty. In both areas consortia were responsible for overseeing dispersal with variable degrees of coordination and communication, which were more effective in the West Midlands.

A number of important issues are therefore highlighted in the existing research on dispersal including implementation, the nature of the system, coping with additional legislative change, and the problems for asylum seekers in accessing support. The Home Office study (Anie et al., 2005) raised a concern over the variation in levels of support in different dispersal locations. These issues all suggest the importance of context in understanding the impact of dispersal on asylum seekers and other service providers, how responses and infrastructures develop over time, and how they interact with ongoing changes in legislation. Each of these issues suggests that examining a single dispersal location, and the responses of different groups affected, is a productive strategy for further understanding the impact of asylum policy. With this in mind, findings from research carried out within Scotland are now discussed further.

### ***2.1.3 The Scottish Context***

The discussion above has highlighted the need to understand the impact of policy on asylum seekers and those supporting them, and the importance of context in this process. This section therefore highlights some issues that have been identified in previous research carried out within Scotland regarding asylum policy, and how this influenced the research design and analysis. Important points include the reserved nature of asylum policy and centralised decision making, partnership working, responses to the question of integration, specific challenges relating to resources, and the problems faced by women asylum seekers. Before going on to consider the work on asylum, however, a number of studies also provide important background on issues such as multiculturalism, A8 migrants and deprivation, which have important implications for the reception and support of asylum seekers.

Audrey (2000) examines the histories of different migrant groups in Scotland (primarily Glasgow), and provides a case study of Pakistanis in the Govanhill area of Glasgow. She considers issues of identity, service provision and the process of multiculturalism. It was found that each incoming group, Irish, Italian, Jewish and Pakistani, faced hostility and negative stereotyping, although to different degrees, as

well as tensions around maintaining identities, and difficulties in accessing services. Williams and De Lima (2006) consider issues of multiculturalism and racial equality within devolved settings. They argue (Williams and De Lima, 2006: 508) that the Scottish Executive inherited a fairly weak race equality infrastructure in 1999, although there was recognition of the growing need to address race more explicitly. Six years later there was evidence of more investment in race equality initiatives, although a focus on social inclusion tended to privilege labour market participation at the expense of other dimensions of inclusion, and there was still scepticism about the gap between government rhetoric and negative attitudes from the majority population (Williams and De Lima, 2006: 510). The impotence of the Scottish Government in facilitating employment for asylum seekers also raises questions about the ability of devolved governments to achieve any radical shifts in policy areas controlled from Westminster. Work on deprivation and social justice (Social Disadvantage Research Centre, 2003) also highlights the fact that asylum seekers have been housed in many of the most deprived areas in Scotland, which had implications for the resources available for integration, as discussed further below. The context has also been changed by the arrival of large numbers of A8 migrants which has increased the demands for certain services such as language teaching (Beadle and Silverman, 2007), and added another dimension to integration work.

Barclay et al. (2003) carried out a major study on the effects of the IAA on asylum seekers and devolved services in Scotland, with a number of important findings. A number of problems related to the high degree of centralisation, and an initial assumption by key service providers that the impact on their services would be minimal, fostered by a lack of additional funding for services such as police and social work. Barclay et al. (2003: 23) found that the development of services was hampered by a lack of funding, a lack of co-ordination, difficulties in communication with the Home Office and a lack of experience. There was a widespread view, however, that after a slow start, there had been a significant improvement in the level of service provision for asylum seekers. Similar issues were noted above in relation to dispersal areas in England. At the same time there was increased involvement from the Scottish Executive, after initially playing only a minimal role. Cairney (2006: 441) suggests that the murder of the asylum seeker Firsat Dag in August



2001, and the crisis over children in Dungavel (which had previously been a prison), were important prompts in increasing Scottish Executive involvement in what had previously been regarded as exclusively a reserved issue. One outcome of the increased involvement of the Scottish Executive was the formation of the Scottish Refugee Integration Forum (SRIF), which helped to formalise an understanding of integration which applied to asylum seekers as well as refugees. It is important to understand how the devolved context has influenced the capabilities and approach to supporting asylum seekers in Glasgow and this issue recurs throughout the thesis.

Barclay et al. (2003) identified a number of areas that were perceived as strengths and weaknesses<sup>3</sup> in the provision of support for asylum seekers, although there was not agreement over these from all respondents. Strengths included integration through schools and colleges, free legal advice and representation, willingness to accept criticism, recreational support and the provision of interpreting services (Barclay et al., 2003: 30). Weaknesses included lack of funding and resources, the relationship with NASS, the lack of legal support services, a perceived need for accredited training and development for those who work with asylum seekers, a perceived need for greater access to bi-lingual staff, difficulties in recruiting interpreters, and barriers to access in English language teaching and higher education (Barclay et al., 2003: 31). Barclay et al.'s (2003) research also highlighted the importance of partnership working, as multi-agency working was seen as the basis of good practice, although it was not without difficulties as it involved considerable commitment and demands on time.

Barclay et al. (2003) produced a broad overview that provides important insights into the early responses to dispersal, and identifies a number of issues that are important to follow up, including the continuing development of services, the role of the Scottish Government, and perceived strengths and weaknesses. Sim and Bowes (2007) draw further on this same study and consider the possibilities for the creation of a new multicultural community in Glasgow, highlighting the political will and a willingness to learn from past mistakes. Wren (2004) looks more specifically at

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<sup>3</sup> The notion of identifying strengths and weaknesses is one which recurs throughout this thesis. It is recognised, however, that these are normative categories, and it is acknowledged that these are assessed from a perspective whereby supporting asylum seeker integration is viewed in a positive light.

the work of the local integration networks that were set up in Glasgow and their role in supporting asylum seekers. These networks were intended to facilitate joint working and encourage community involvement, although there was considerable local variation in working practices. It was found that, in general, many new asylum seekers had difficulty understanding the nature of the services available (Wren, 2004: 29). There were also a number of issues relating to resources and changing circumstances, although the study was acknowledged to be a snapshot (Wren, 2004). Other studies have addressed specific aspects of asylum in Scotland such as destitution (Green, 2006), funding (Fraser of Allander Institute for Research on the Scottish Economy, 2005, ODS Consulting, 2007) skills and aspirations of asylum seekers (Charlaff et al., 2004), experiences of women asylum seekers (Refugee Women's Strategy Group, 2007), and public attitudes (Lewis, 2006); or specific time periods, such as Kelly's (2002) study of the early stages of dispersal and the high-profile period of August 2001. A number of these aspects are of importance to the issues of social capital and integration and are discussed below.

There is therefore a body of work which has studied the implementation of dispersal in Scotland, identified strengths and weaknesses, looked at the profile of the asylum seeking community, and attitudes from the receiving community. There are a number of ways in which it is possible to build on this work. There have been several significant changes in the legal framework for asylum and the processing of cases, with the aim of speeding up both decisions and removals. These changes call for shifts in the services provided for asylum seekers, and the coping strategies of individuals. At the same time, the new accommodation contract in Glasgow has changed the landscape for asylum and integration work, by bringing in a new private provider and housing asylum seekers more widely across the city. One of the strengths highlighted in Barclay et al. (2003: 30) was that, as the work in Glasgow went through one local authority, Glasgow City Council, services were well integrated. The situation has changed with the addition of a private housing provider in the new contract. It is therefore important to try and understand the impact of these structural changes for asylum seekers and other stakeholders, not only in terms of the impact of policy, but also for the effects on integration.

## **2.2 INTEGRATION AND MULTICULTURALISM**

Asylum policy impacts on how asylum seekers experience the process of applying for and awaiting a decision. Integration policy and practice are a fundamental part of this process. Policies and practice on multiculturalism are important in framing the approaches to integration. Multiculturalism is the subject of many debates and controversies, both academic and political, which are important to acknowledge, but which cannot be treated here in any depth. It is discussed briefly, however, prior to focusing on concepts and policies regarding integration.

### ***2.2.1 Multiculturalism***

The role of a multiculturalism based race relations framework in the UK, in shaping integration practice has been highlighted by several authors (for example: Favell, 1998, Zetter et al., 2002). Favell (1998: 97) describes the model for integration in Britain as a paradoxical triumph of race relations that combines two different areas of legislation: the development of nationality law and changing justifications for very harsh and restrictive immigration controls, and relatively enlightened and progressive race relations legislation. Zetter et al. (2002) consider different concepts of integration, and note that the main contours of what is described as the incorporation regime in the UK are the proliferation of voluntary agencies and the multicultural race relations framework. Neither the processes, nor the understandings of integration, however, are static. In terms of policy, Audrey (2000: 234) argues that in the 1970s and 1980s the key issue was one of language; by the 1990s there was a greater emphasis on the legal obligation to avoid indirect discrimination. These shifts also apply to processes surrounding multiculturalism: Audrey (2000: 236) argues that multiculturalism and integration refer to a process through which newcomers arrive and settle, but it is a non-linear process rather than a steady path from initial hostility to subsequent acceptance. She further argues that hostility and exclusionary practices intermingle with notions of fair and equal treatment, and external events also have an impact.

The problematic status of multiculturalism is highlighted by Mitchell (2004: 641) who argues that state-sponsored multiculturalism is in retreat, at the same time as assimilation is shedding its tarnished image. Although it is a term which is used with variation, Mitchell (2004: 641) suggests that the generalisable discourse is that state-sponsored multiculturalism has ultimately failed. The mixed picture under Labour is noted by both Back et al (2002) and Schuster and Solomos (2004), combining achievements such as the MacPherson Report and the 2000 Race Relations (Amendment) Act, with increasingly negative language and policy towards asylum seekers. Policies on race and multiculturalism in the early years of New Labour are analysed by Back et al. (2002), who consider whether there has been a return of assimilationism. They argue that the statements of Home Secretary Blunkett in particular, almost explicitly undermine the gains made around cultural rights and multiculturalism. The civil unrest in northern English cities in the summer of 2001 was identified as an important factor in shifting away from a celebration of multicultural diversity (2002: 3). They also highlight the tensions between the language of diversity and racial justice, and the incredibly stringent immigration policy. The usefulness of the term multiculturalism has also been debated. Trevor Phillips, Head of the Commission for Racial Equality (now part of the Equality and Human Rights Commission), sparked controversy in 2004 by suggesting that the term multiculturalism was now divisive rather than useful. Writing in *The Guardian* (Phillips, 2004), he argued that multiculturalism has focused too much on the recognition of difference, rather than the achievement of equality, which will lead to entrenched segregation.

All of these shifts and debates around multiculturalism are important in terms of the broader climate for integration policy and practice. A number of authors have highlighted the connections in policy discourse between maintaining secure borders and the promotion of positive community relations (for example: Schuster and Solomos, 2004, Yuval-Davis et al., 2005). Drawing such a connection therefore directly impacts on the experiences of asylum seekers, through restrictions on and after entry. The differences in the Scottish context are, however, highlighted by Sim and Bowes (2007: 742) who note that, within the restrictions of devolution, the general tenor of Scottish Executive policy has been to portray Scotland as a place

where inward migration is actually welcomed. They also consider the argument that multiculturalism may have more prospect of success in Scotland than in England for two key reasons. Firstly, politics is not racialised, the presence of right-wing parties is weak and there is a broad political consensus supporting policies that challenge racism and support integration. Secondly, Scots themselves may have multiple identities as both Scottish and British, or not English, and asylum seekers may therefore be able to negotiate multiple identities as part of integrating into Scottish society. The contrasts between UK and Scottish policy levels and contexts and the implications for integration are discussed further below.

### ***2.2.2 Concepts of Integration***

The discussion above has indicated that definitions and policies regarding multiculturalism play an important role in shaping integration policy. The conceptual debate and policy controversy surrounding multiculturalism is similar to that of integration for which there is no single generally accepted definition. Ager et al. (2002: 3) note that while there is a lack of consensus on a definition, integration is nevertheless a policy goal. This section discusses some conceptual work on integration, and the types of definitions offered, before considering integration work in practice, and the implications of integration for those, such as asylum seekers, who have only temporary status. Integration could be said to apply to any group of migrants, or any disadvantaged group within society, however, the discussion here is based on the literature on refugees and where possible asylum seekers, due to the specificity of their circumstances. It can still be problematic, however, as integration studies can use refugee as an overarching label for all forced migrants, including asylum seekers, despite their different legal status and entitlements.

The European Council on Refugees and Exiles' (ECRE) definition of integration as a dynamic, two-way, long term process which begins from the day of arrival in the host society has been widely influential (European Council on Refugees and Exiles, 2005). Thus, although there is a lack of a clear definition, integration remains distinct from assimilation, with its focus on one-way adaptation by the

migrant, although the boundaries may be somewhat blurred in practice. Several studies have emphasised that integration is both about functional aspects such as employment and housing, and about social relations and participation (for example Ager et al., 2002, Korac, 2003). Defining integration in this way has important implications for its applicability to the situation of asylum seekers, given the restrictions imposed by their temporary status. Ager et al.'s (2002) conceptual analysis of refugee integration highlights a number of important points relating to integration. They (2002: 6) reiterate that it is a two way process, which should be considered as occurring in stages, as long-term integration is seriously affected by experiences during the reception phase. Ager et al.'s (2002: 23) suggested definition incorporates relationships, public outcomes and shared notions of citizenship and nationhood. Zetter et al. (2002) examine four main contours of the discourse on integration which offer insights into the specific case of refugees: agency and modes of inclusion; state formation; rights-based access and acculturation. They (2002: 131) argue that the key factor across these typologies is the nature of the framework of statutes, policies, and institutions: the emphasis is on procedural and juridical components rather than social and cultural processes of inclusion.

Ager and Strang (2004b) combined the conceptual analysis noted above with qualitative research in London and Glasgow to produce a framework for Indicators of Integration (IoI), which suggests ten domains for integration: employment, housing, education, health, social bridges, social bonds, social links, language and cultural knowledge, safety and stability, and rights and citizenship. The emphasis on social connections highlights the spread of the terminology from social capital into concepts and policy on integration, an aspect that is discussed further below. Breaking down a broad definition of integration as a two-way process into a number of different domains is important for understanding individual processes and outcomes for integration and the interaction of different factors. Dona and Berry (1999: 176) argue that individuals can have different acculturation strategies towards different dimensions of integration, for example a strategy of integration with regards to language, and one of separation with regards to marriage. These strategies may, however, be constrained by state policies and social attitudes. Portes and Zhou (1993) use the concept of segmented assimilation to highlight the fact that integration may

not occur into mainstream society. It is important to understand the processes within each domain of integration, while recognising that, given the subjective nature of integration processes, the efficacy of the indicators may vary for individuals.

In addition to studies that have looked at concepts and definitions of integration, a number of barriers have also been identified. On the basis of a review of the evidence on successful approaches to integration, Spencer (2006) suggests six mutually reinforcing factors that limit the process of integration: a lack of language skills and or recognised qualifications, a lack of mobility, a lack of knowledge of the system, generic service insufficiencies, hostile public attitudes, and legal barriers associated with immigration status. Mestheneos and Ioannidi (2002) argue that context has a significant influence on perceptions of integration and highlight a number of potential barriers including the impact of long periods spent waiting for a decision on status, ignorance and racism, and cultural barriers based on individualistic western cultures and society. When considering integration in relation to asylum seekers rather than refugees, the legal barriers associated with their immigration status are of crucial importance. The restrictions imposed make certain aspects of integration, particularly relating to public outcomes around education, housing and employment, unavailable to asylum seekers. The focus on labour market participation for social inclusion, highlighted by Williams and De Lima (2006), is also a problematic aspect of definitions of integration when related to asylum seekers. This indicates the difficulties of promoting integration for asylum seekers when different initiatives and policy areas such as inclusion, regeneration, and integration may overlap due to the housing of asylum seekers in largely deprived areas. Policy and practice on integration relating both to asylum seekers and refugees in the UK are now discussed further.

### ***2.2.3 Integration Policy and Experiences***

The debates about the definition of integration have had a direct impact on policy and practice, which may adopt different notions, and reflect the lack of clarity. This section considers some of the approaches found in policy documents, discussing the

UK National Refugee Integration Strategy and the work of the Scottish Refugee Integration Forum (SRIF), as well as looking at work on integration strategies in different locations, some of which draws on the perceptions and experiences of asylum seekers and refugees themselves.

The UK National Refugee Integration Strategy (Home Office, 2005) defines integration as ‘a process that takes place when refugees are empowered to achieve their full potential as members of British society, to contribute to the community and to become fully able to exercise the rights and responsibilities shared with other residents’. The strategy is specifically aimed at those who have been granted refugee status, or granted some other form of discretionary leave or humanitarian protection, asylum seekers are therefore excluded. This is not a stance shared either by voluntary agencies working with refugees (for example, Refugee Council, 2004: 4), who argue that the integration process must begin from the day of arrival and not be deferred until leave to remain is granted; or the SRIF which includes actions for both refugees and asylum seekers. The national strategy, however, recognises the specific needs of refugees due to their experiences and circumstances, and the challenges to participation in society relating to language, employment and confronting negative stereotypes. It acknowledges that integration is a complex process whose achievement can be measured in many different ways, and for the purposes of the strategy, highlights three themes: achieving full potential, contributing to communities, and accessing services (Home Office, 2005b: 9). Within these there are eight indicators selected to be of the most importance: employment; English language attainment; volunteering; contact with community organisations; take-up of British citizenship; housing standards; reporting of racial, cultural or religious harassment and access to education.

The Scottish strategy, based around the work of the SRIF (Scottish Refugee Integration Forum, 2005) highlights the importance of integration of both asylum seekers and refugees for all communities, existing and new, living in Scotland. The original action plan identified 57 key actions on areas including specialist services such as the provision of translation and interpreting and advice services, creating positive images, and the promotion of justice and support for communities. The broad range of actions are described as at times being more like principles than tasks



and are therefore challenging to measure and report on. The distinctions between the Scottish and UK strategies, and the importance of context for the integration process, indicate that it is worthwhile to research integration in more depth within Scotland. The SRIF strategy is discussed again in Chapter 4 in relation to policy.

Ager et al. (2002: 12) argue, however, that the policy frameworks cannot in themselves create integration, but can create the legal, social and economic conditions surrounding it. It is therefore important to also look at experiences of the integration process in a more contextualised manner to understand different perceptions of the integration process and the interaction of different factors. Studies are often used to highlight particular difficulties with the concept of integration, the process of integration, or with the way in which policies impinge on the process. Korac (2003) compares the experiences of refugees in Italy and the Netherlands. She argues that while the Dutch process addressed many requirements self-identified by refugees as important, this did not in itself make refugees feel integrated. By contrast, although Italian assistance was minimal, often creating challenges in attaining minimal security, it allowed space for refugees' own agency in the integration process. Korac uses these examples to highlight the fact that integration is about both functional aspects and social participation, and that the way that refugees are helped may actually undermine their own coping strategies. Brekke (2004) considers the experiences of asylum seekers in Sweden, and focuses particularly on the impact of waiting for a decision on the asylum application. He highlights the difficulties of this uncertainty for integration, as asylum seekers must remain orientated to the possibilities of both settlement and return.

Ager and Strang (2004a) examined experiences of integration in the local communities of Pollockshaws in Glasgow and Islington in London. The aim was to understand the extent to which local communities judged that integration had been achieved, by looking at local perceptions of the community as a place to live and how settled both refugees and non-refugees felt in the area. In addition to identifying local understandings of the concept of integration, the aim was also to identify local factors seen to support or disrupt the process of integration. A number of important points arise from this research. Ager and Strang (2004a: 3) argue that integration is most clearly defined by the nature of the relationships that exist between locals and

non-locals; feeling safe from threats, friendliness and belonging were all identified as important. Drawing on this, a continuum of expectations is identified ranging from 'no trouble' to 'mixing' and 'belonging' (Ager and Strang, 2004a: 3). Equality of access to services is also identified as being of particular importance. Factors that were seen as supporting integration included safety and stability, English language skills, and advice and cultural understanding. As the research deals only with refugees, there is scope for understanding how these factors apply when asylum seekers are included.

One factor that may promote or inhibit integration is the attitudes of the host population. Yet understanding these attitudes is not straightforward, as emphasised by Crawley's (2005) review of the available evidence on attitudes towards asylum and immigration. Crawley (2005: 9) notes that, although there is a large amount of evidence available that points to negative attitudes, there are considerable problems with using this as a basis for policymaking, as there is a limited understanding of the factors that underlie attitudes towards asylum seekers and variations in these attitudes. There is little understanding among the British public of the difference between ethnic minorities, immigrants and asylum seekers. Crawley (2005) argues that the factors that influence attitudes towards asylum seekers are highly complex and frequently interconnected, often reflecting an individual's wider world view. Broader social and economic structures, national culture and the proportion and integration of immigrants both nationally and locally are all important, as are individual attributes such as labour market position, education and socio-demographic factors. The concept of relative deprivation is highlighted as being very important (Crawley, 2005: 14). Crawley argues that central government discourse and the politics of asylum are important in setting the context within which information about local issues is interpreted, and the political debate in the UK has been framed almost entirely in terms of the pull of the UK, numbers, and abuse of the system. Regional variations are noted, and although Scotland is generally considered as being more tolerant, evidence was found to be mixed. Lewis (2006) looks in more depth at attitudes towards asylum within Scotland, and also questions whether attitudes in Scotland are in fact more positive. It was found that there was more tolerance, with general support for the principle of asylum, but that this overall

tolerance masks considerable hostility within particular groups. Although those living in Glasgow were very hostile, those living within, or next to areas housing asylum seekers were overwhelmingly more positive (Lewis, 2006: 13). As in Crawley's study, a complex set of messages and circumstances were found to influence attitudes including a lack of information; the role of the media; the views of political parties; meaningful contact with people from other ethnic backgrounds; the poor initial dispersal process; and racism. Outright racism was largely socially unacceptable, but prejudice against asylum seekers did not attract any social sanction. Generally, the debate is also influenced by events south of the border, but the more positive debate in Scotland shows that there is space for political manoeuvre, with a positive discourse from the Scottish Government and a coordinated multi-agency approach. Attitudes are therefore an important contextual aspect that links to government policy, forming the broader backdrop for integration policy and practice.

There are therefore a number of important and complex issues arising from previous work on integration. There are difficulties relating to definitions and practice, and it is important to understand how these have been dealt with within the Scottish context, where there is a more inclusive official approach to integration. Discussions on how to promote integration often draw on language and terms from the social capital literature and these links are now considered in more depth below.

## **2.3 SOCIAL CAPITAL**

The difficult and contested nature of integration was discussed above, and in a similar manner, social capital is also a highly debated concept in terms not only of definitions, but also of applications, outcomes, measurement and even its existence. But in spite of these problems, it is frequently referred to in policy documents in several fields, but of most relevance here, in relation to contributing to the process of integration. Important debates and definitions relating to social capital are discussed in this section, including the different forms of social capital, followed by a consideration of its relation to integration.

### ***2.3.1 Definitions and Debates***

In order to understand the debates around social capital, key definitions of the concept are explored, drawing on the work and critiques of Bourdieu (1986/1997), Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1993, 1995, 2000, 2007) all of whom have been influential in the formation and popularising of social capital. The difficulties of applying the concept are noted, including critiques of both the applications and outcomes of social capital. The different varieties of social capital including ‘bridging’ and ‘bonding’ are also noted.

Bourdieu argues for the importance of the recognition of capital in all its forms, and not just economic capital. He argues (1997: 47) that social capital represents social obligations or ‘connections’ that are convertible under certain conditions into economic capital. Social capital is ‘the aggregate of actual or potential resources linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition – or to membership in a group’ (Bourdieu, 1997: 51). As Portes (1998: 4) notes, Bourdieu’s treatment of the concept is instrumental in that it highlights the potential exchangeability of forms of capital and the possibility of exchange into economic capital. Bourdieu further argues that the totality of social capital among a group can become concentrated in the hands of a single agent or small group of agents,

highlighting potential problems relating to leadership, an issue that is returned to in Section 8.2.

In Coleman's (1988) analysis, social capital is defined by its function. He argues (1988: 98) that it is an aspect of social structures that facilitates certain actions of actors within these structures. Social capital is therefore productive, making possible the achievement of desired ends. Coleman argues that there are various components or resources of social capital that make these achievements possible. These consist of the trustworthiness and obligations of the environment, the provision of channels of information, and the provision of norms and effective sanctions. He argues that it is both a public and a private good, of benefit to both individuals and communities. Coleman suggests that individuals lack control of the relations of social capital; it is most often created or destroyed as a by-product, and the benefits of an action that bring social capital into being may be largely experienced by persons other than the actor. Portes (1998) argues that Coleman's work opened the way for the relabelling of different and even contradictory processes as social capital.

An extremely influential shift in understandings of the concept of social capital, came, however, through the work of Putnam, first in his work on local government in Italy (1993) and then through discussions of levels of civic engagement in America (2000). Social capital is argued to provide an explanatory variable for different levels of success in economics and governance. Putnam (1995) defines social capital as the features of social organisation such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit. Like Coleman, Putnam sees social capital as being both a private and a public good. He argues (2000: 20) that some benefit from investment in social capital goes to bystanders while some goes immediately towards the interest of the person making the investment. For Putnam these networks affect the productivity of groups and individuals, and improve government performance. This happens as a result of the trust, norms of conduct and reciprocity that are created. Putnam (1995: 67) argues that life is easier in a community blessed with a substantial stock of social capital. Networks of co-ordination facilitate communication and allow dilemmas of collective action to be resolved.

It can be seen from the summaries above that a number of disagreements are present regarding the definition and applications of social capital. A recent review of the social capital literature (Ben Cave Associates Ltd, 2007) suggests a definition of social capital as a network-based process that generates positive and negative outcomes, through norms and trust, which are shaped at the societal, neighbourhood and individual levels, and that has structural and cognitive elements. Functionalist definitions have been criticised for not separating what social capital is from what it does (Edwards and Foley, 1997, Woolcock, 1998). Portes (1998: 6) argues for a separation into possessors, sources and resources to address the risk of tautological argument. Difficulties in operationalising social capital are also frequently noted (for example: Forrest and Kearns, 2001, Hibbit et al., 2001, Johnston and Percy-Smith, 2003). The assumption that social capital is always a public good has also been questioned and the potentially negative outcomes highlighted. Woolcock (1998: 158) notes the potentially heavy obligations that can be placed on group members, a point also made by Portes (1998: 15ff), who also notes the risks of exclusion, restriction on individual freedoms and downward-levelling norms. One means of dealing with some of these critiques has been to highlight the different dimensions or domains of social capital with a particularly important distinction drawn between 'bridging' and 'bonding' capital. This is highlighted in the work of Putnam (2000), and the terminology has been adopted for use in developing indicators of integration for refugees by Ager and Strang (2004b).

Bonding capital can be seen as exclusive, whereas bridging capital is inclusive. Putnam (2000: 22) notes that some groups may by choice or by necessity be inward looking and reinforce an exclusive identity. Others are outward looking and encompass people across diverse social cleavages. These different types of social capital have their own advantages and disadvantages. The essential difference, Putnam (2000: 23) argues, is that while bonding social capital is good for getting by, it is bridging social capital that is essential for getting ahead. The strong ties of bonding social capital may provide specific relations of reciprocity and encourage solidarity, but it is the weaker links or bridges with acquaintances in different social circles that provide better access to external assets and information diffusion. This argument echoes the findings of Stack (1974), whose case study of a deprived black

neighbourhood showed the necessity of strong ties with friends and families to everyday survival, but also that these same ties could prevent people from establishing themselves in a better economic position. The bridging/bonding distinction is similar to the division drawn by Purdue (2001) between communal and collaborative social capital in his discussion of the role of community leaders in local regeneration partnerships. In this instance, communal social capital refers to the resources the leader can draw on from his relations with those in the community, while collaborative social capital, such as access to economic resources, comes from the links to others in the partnerships such as local authorities. The distinction is not necessarily absolute; many groups may have both bridging and bonding tendencies in different aspects of their organisation or activities. As Putnam (2000: 23) argues the categories are 'more or less' rather than 'either/or'. A further issue is that strong internal group bonds do not necessarily have the positive externalities that social capital is generally argued to have. Putnam (2000: 21) suggests that networks and associated norms of reciprocity are generally good for those inside the network, but the external effects are by no means always positive. Terrorist and urban gangs provide examples of strong networks, but negative outcomes. While the negative aspects of strong in-group loyalties are an important issue to raise, Leonard (2004) provides a more nuanced critique, highlighting the problems of internal inequalities within bonded communities and the uncertain benefits of promoting the transition to bridging capital. Bonding and bridging in relation to integration are discussed further below. There is also a concern that a focus on social capital ignores broader issues of inequality.

Despite these critiques, however, social capital continues to be used as a theoretical framework and is drawn on in policy documents. It allows the importance of relationships and of context to be brought to the forefront. Zetter et al. (2006: 25) while recognising the critiques and limitations of the concept of social capital, suggest that it nonetheless provides an effective lens with which to investigate social cohesion and immigration. While it may not necessarily be the most useful way to view relationships between different groups it provides a focus both on processes, and on the micro level of associational activity and community relations,

highlighting day to day life and interactions. Literature bringing a social capital perspective to integration is now discussed further.

### ***2.3.2 Social Capital and Integration***

Social capital is of importance to the concept of integration in a number of ways, both concepts share a focus on relationships and increasing both bridging and bonding capital are seen as important in the integration process. Social capital has been used both implicitly and explicitly in work on the experience of refugee community organisations (Zetter et al., 2005), asylum seekers in Scotland (Barclay et al., 2003) and the work of the integration networks in Glasgow (Wren, 2004). Concepts from social capital, particularly the notions of bridging and bonding capital have also been crucial in the development of a framework of indicators of integration for refugees (Ager and Strang, 2004b).

The difficulties of making a transition from bonding to bridging were noted in the work of Leonard (2004) above. Recent work from the Commission for Racial Equality (Ben Cave Associates Ltd, 2007) has, however, stressed the importance of bonding as a foundation for integration, as it plays a protective role, which is important, even if only indirectly, for integration. It is noted that bridging can occur along both class and race dimensions, through connections to those who are able to provide contacts to better information or opportunities. The importance of context is highlighted, particularly socio-economic status, as it is argued that disorder and poverty negatively influence the ability to engage in social activities with neighbours, amplify a sense of powerlessness and mistrust, and generate inter-group competition and prejudice. It is further argued that, if integration is a two way process, then the onus cannot be solely on migrants, as conditions and opportunities for integration are also important. Cheong et al. (2007) also highlight the fact that the host society context can facilitate or constrain different components of social capital.

Another aspect of social capital identified as important in relation to integration is the role of networks. The study by Zetter et al. (2005) found that a dearth of associational structures was problematic for newly arriving ethnic groups,



particularly within the context of dispersal. The importance of the broader policy context is therefore highlighted. The relevance of social capital within a context of social exclusion is questioned, although the importance of informal networks is emphasised, particularly in a context of rejection from formal structures. Wren (2004) also highlights the importance of networks, although from an organisational rather than individual perspective, considering the role of different integration networks in supporting the integration process in Glasgow. Ager and Strang (2004) emphasise the importance of bridges, bonds and links as contributory tools in the process of integration. They note the complex nature of local communities, and the need to be flexible in responding to particular circumstances when considering integration. The work of Ager and Strang is important in providing both a conceptual analysis of integration and drawing on fieldwork (partly based in Glasgow) as a basis for the indicators of integration framework, but as it focuses only on refugee integration, it is important to consider how it might apply to the circumstances of asylum seekers. It is argued that integration cannot be entirely accounted for in terms of public spheres of political frameworks, social connections and service outcomes, but that it also belongs to the private sphere of subjective experience, with issues regarding sense of belonging, isolation and identity

Social capital is therefore not straightforward, either as a conceptual framework in itself, or in relation to integration. Despite its problems and limitations, however, it has been found of value in studies of integration process, and the terminology has been adopted in frameworks for measuring and conceptualising integration such as the Indicators of Integration discussed above. It is therefore important to consider the advantages and disadvantages of using a social capital framework for integration and how it relates to experiences of the integration process. The CRE report (Ben Cave Associates Ltd, 2007: 29) cites Gillies's depiction of social capital as a 'descriptive construct rather than an explanatory theory' which is a useful depiction as it allows the problems of social capital to be acknowledged whilst still recognising its analytical usefulness in capturing and describing features of the integration process.

## CONCLUSION

Reviewing key areas of literature on asylum policy, integration and social capital, indicates a number important themes and issues that need to be addressed to understand the impacts of asylum policy and the integration process. Research on asylum policy highlights problems with both the operation of the asylum system and the difficulties that it creates for asylum seekers. The increasing focus on deterrence and removal rather than protection and integration has important implications for the experiences of asylum seekers themselves and those working with them. Ongoing legislative changes, and comparatively little research on the Scottish context, make it valuable not only to continue to assess the impact of policy, but also to understand how this is affected by the implementation of reserved policy within a devolved context. One important difference is in the official approach to integration, with a more inclusive approach in Scotland. Yet integration is challenging both conceptually and practically, and the difficulties of defining and promoting integration are a recurrent theme. Examining these in a context which supports integration from the day of arrival raises important questions about what integration means and how it can be evaluated within a situation where it may only be temporary. Terminology from social capital is often used within integration discourse, frequently focusing on the need to create bridges, bonds, and links, and given the contested nature of social capital, it is necessary to consider the advantages and disadvantages of a social-capital based framework. The issues raised in the literature led to the development and refinement of three principal research questions, on experiences of the asylum process, responses to integration and the value of social capital. These questions, and the methods that were employed to investigate them, are discussed further in Chapter 3.

### **3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND PRACTICE**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter documents and reflects on the research design, data collection and data analysis employed in this study of the integration of dispersed asylum seekers in Glasgow. The choices made throughout the research process are discussed, the implications considered, and the strengths and weaknesses acknowledged. Researching within the area of asylum policy has a number of important research design implications. It is a highly politicised area, focusing on a vulnerable and marginalised group, therefore ethical implications arise at every stage of the research process. The ethical guidelines of the British Sociological Association (2002) and the Social Research Association (2003) were used, and ethical concerns are discussed throughout in relation to different aspects of the research, rather than in a separate section.

There are three main sections to this chapter, dealing with research design as an ongoing process, data collection, and data analysis and presentation. The first section considers why a qualitative approach was considered appropriate for the research questions outlined, and the further choices that were made, such as the selection of Glasgow as a case study and the methods that were employed. The key points from the original research proposal and the changes that arose during the process of carrying out the research are discussed. The data collection process is then discussed in depth, looking first at issues relating to researching 'hard-to-reach' populations. The three methods used: participant observation, semi structured interviews and documentary analysis are considered. Issues of access, consent, ethical concerns, and the types of data generated are discussed in relation to each of these methods. The final section deals with data analysis and presentation. The starting points and development of the analysis, including the use of NVivo, are discussed. There are a number of difficult issues in terms of the presentation of the research, particularly anonymity, confidentiality, and the selection and attribution of quotations, and the ways in which these issues were addressed are discussed. The

final section describes the research process, the choices made, the changes that occurred, and the limitations and strengths of the evidence for the arguments that are set out in Chapters 4-8. The aim is to provide a reflexive and transparent account of the research process.

### **3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN: AN ONGOING PROCESS**

This section sets out the overall context and structure for the research, discussing the initial choices that were made and the changes that occurred during the process of carrying out the research. The initial design was intended to be sufficiently flexible to allow space for learning and adjusting whilst undertaking the fieldwork, and to take account of a fast moving policy environment in which changes could have significant implications for the research questions. Understanding the changes in the research design is important, for as Silverman (2005: 36) argues, what happens in the field as you attempt to gather data is itself a source of data, rather than just a technical problem. The development of the research questions is discussed first, followed by an overview of the research design.

The review of the literature in the preceding chapter highlighted a number of important issues relating to understanding the impact of policy, the importance of context, and the use of social capital in integration policy and practice. This led to the development of three research questions:

- 1. What are the experiences of those living and working in dispersal areas within Glasgow and how do these enable us to evaluate asylum policy?*
- 2. In what ways is integration a problematic concept and how has this been addressed in Glasgow?*
- 3. Are concepts such as social capital a useful tool in analysing asylum dispersal and community relations?*

While these questions have been refined during the course of the research, the modifications have been for the purpose of clarification rather than introducing any

substantial shifts in direction, and the underlying aims and intentions have remained the same. The rationale behind each question is now discussed.

The intention of question one was to understand the effects of dispersal policy on the people involved in dispersal areas (both asylum seekers and service providers), and to use these experiences to evaluate the policy frameworks developed and applied at local and national level. The literature review highlighted the ongoing legislative changes and the impacts that policies have on asylum seekers and those working with them. Several studies indicated the importance of local factors in mediating the experiences of dispersal and the possibilities for integration. This led on to a consideration of integration, both in theory and in practice, as addressed in question two. The literature review indicated the importance of examining both policy frameworks, and experiences of integration. This required a consideration of how integration has been used in the literature and in policy, and the experiences of those within dispersal areas. The intention was to gain an understanding of efforts to support integration and different views on how integration is defined and promoted in the context of a group with temporary status. The aim was for both a conceptual and a practical understanding of what integration means within the context of the dispersal areas of Glasgow. The literature review demonstrated that the concept of social capital has become increasingly prominent in research on refugee and asylum policy, though its meaning and usefulness remain contested. The purpose of question three was to review definitions and applications of social capital, and consider how these relate to integration theory and practice. On this basis, the usefulness of the concept in relation to asylum policy can be assessed.

There are a number of features of the research that suggest a qualitative approach is the most appropriate means of addressing the three research questions set out above. Most importantly, qualitative research, while recognising all the variation contained within that term, allows for an emphasis on context and experience that is vital in understanding the impacts of policy for target groups and stakeholders (as defined in the introductory chapter), and the responses to policies and policy changes. Bryman (2001: 279) also notes that qualitative research tends to emphasise processes. This is important in allowing an understanding of the ways in which responses to policy and integration strategies have unfolded over time, since

integration itself is a process. The issues under investigation are not static, and while the research can provide only a snapshot of these processes, it is important to recognise the fluidity that characterises the research environment. The literature review indicated a number of reasons why context is important: the characteristics of the dispersal location, the quantity and types of services available, and the information resources available to all concerned are critical factors in shaping the experiences of dispersal. For these reasons it was decided to focus on one dispersal location in depth.

There are a number of features about Glasgow that make it both an interesting and important location for the research. As a local authority it is the largest dispersal location in the UK. There was both a low existing minority ethnic population, and serious problems of deprivation (particularly in those areas where most asylum seekers were housed), features highlighted by the Audit Commission (2000) as important in determining the suitability of areas for dispersal. Glasgow is also the only dispersal location in Scotland, and offers an opportunity to understand the implications of the devolved context for the implementation of asylum policy. The differences in integration strategies between Scotland and the rest of the UK are another point of interest, providing a new angle into understanding dispersal experiences.

Case studies and single cases in particular, offer a number of advantages and disadvantages. Case studies offer the opportunity of developing an in-depth understanding of an issue within a specific context using a multi-method approach. There are several common critiques of case studies including a lack of rigor, a lack of basis for generalisation, and the suggestion that they are too time consuming and unwieldy to analyse and present (Yin, 1994: 10-11). These concerns are refuted by Yin (1994: 32) who argues that the goal of case studies is to expand and generalise theories and understand policy implications – what he refers to as level two inferences, as opposed to level one inferences from a sample to a population, a point reiterated by Bechhofer and Paterson (2000). The choice of case and the methods to be used are clearly crucial in ensuring the strength of the method. Yin (1994: 40) suggests that one rationale for a single case approach is when it represents a unique situation. The reasons for the selection of Glasgow were noted above. As the largest

dispersal location, and the only one in Scotland, it is of vital importance in the dispersal process. Unique features, such as the differences arising from devolution, also provided an opportunity to consider their implications for integration. These unique features also meant that it would not be possible or appropriate to use a pseudonym for the research setting.

Although a qualitative strategy and a case study approach were deemed to be the most appropriate, further choices still had to be made regarding the methods to be employed. These methods are discussed in depth in the next section below; however, it is worth indicating here why they formed part of the research design from the outset. Participant observation was selected for a number of reasons, both as an access strategy and as an important means of generating data. As asylum seekers can be considered a marginalised and hard-to-reach group, participant observation with community-based support groups provided a means of access, of observing efforts to promote integration at first hand, and a way of developing relationships and building trust over a period of time. It was hoped that this would facilitate interviews at a later stage of the research process. Choices also had to be made regarding the location of research sites within Glasgow. The North Glasgow area was selected for the first phase of the participant observation work as it houses the largest concentration of asylum seekers within Glasgow. A map showing the distribution of the asylum seeker population when the research design was developed in 2005 is provided in Appendix 1. The area also had some high profile initial problems from which it was felt good progress had been made; it was therefore an interesting location to understand the changes that have taken place over the course of the dispersal contract. In practical terms, I was also able to make use of an existing contact from my 2004 MSc research in arranging one of the placements. Interviews were planned with both asylum seekers and other stakeholders, both to supplement the data from the participant observation and to gather data from those in positions not accessible through the community groups. It was intended to recruit participants from among dispersed asylum seekers and those working in both the statutory and voluntary sectors. The combination of these two methods was intended to provide an insight into both grassroots and more strategic-level responses to dispersal and integration. In addition the documentary analysis allowed for an understanding of different policy

positions and actions and was also extremely useful in indicating potential interviewees, helping to frame pertinent interview questions and shaping the analytical framework. The application of these methods in practice and their strengths and limitations in terms of addressing the research questions are discussed in more depth in Section 3.2 below. Neither focus groups nor surveys were considered appropriate due to ethical concerns for the personal and sensitive nature of the research, and the practical difficulties that would arise due to varying language and literacy skills amongst the asylum seeker population.

The features of the research design and practice outlined thus far have been consistent throughout the process of designing and carrying out the research. There have, however, been changes in some areas of the initial design. The original research proposal established the background and context for the research, outlined the research questions, and then considered a number of strategic choices. The original intention was to carry out a comparative community-based study in two different areas of Glasgow. Potential factors for area selection included the numbers of asylum seekers housed there, levels of deprivation, pre-existing ethnic populations, and the concentration and type of asylum support organisations. At the time it was felt that the comparative area-based approach provided a means for focusing the study and selecting among the many asylum support services that had developed in Glasgow, although it was acknowledged there would be a trade off of breadth versus depth compared to a single area study. Once the fieldwork was underway, however, the amount of time taken to establish contacts and build relationships within groups became clear. To have added another area would have been overwhelming in terms of both the effort required and the data generated, and would have resulted in not gaining the full potential from the original fieldwork placements. The ethnographic work was therefore focused on two services within the same broad area of Glasgow serving separate but overlapping populations, and the focus of the comparison also shifted from the horizontal to the vertical as the importance of understanding the policy context and strategic level in more depth became clearer over the course of the study. Having outlined the key features of the broader research strategy, the research methods and data collection process are now discussed in more depth.



## **3.2 THE DATA COLLECTION PROCESS**

This section outlines and evaluates the data collection process considering first the general issues arising from carrying out sensitive research with a ‘hard-to-reach’ population. Each of the research methods used, participant observation, interviews and documentary analysis, is then discussed in terms of why it was selected, issues of access and consent (including ethical implications), their advantages and disadvantages and the types of supporting evidence provided in relation to the research questions and the key analytic themes. The use of each method was a learning process, which developed over the course of the research as the research design and practice evolved and were refined.

### ***3.2.1 Accessing ‘Hard-to-Reach’ Populations***

There are a number of issues arising from the subject of the research, which deals with a politically sensitive topic and a stigmatised group. There are ethical and methodological questions for the research process and its outcomes. The difficulties arise from the political nature of the topic and the vulnerable nature of a group who have only temporary status within this country and whose rights are limited. Access is also made more difficult by the limited availability of information on length of residence and the composition of populations in different areas, and language and literacy factors that also have implications for consent. While the difficulties relating to each method are discussed below, there are a number of cross-cutting issues around sampling, gender, the role of gatekeepers and the implications for the claims that can be made on the basis of the data.

#### ***Sampling***

Research with dispersed asylum seekers faces a number of challenges relating to sampling and access. There is a lack of publicly accessible information regarding housing, ethnic background, and length of stay from which a sampling frame could

be produced. The problematic nature of representative sampling for research with asylum seekers and refugees is highlighted by Temple and Moran (2006: 14-15), who note the lack of complete databases, and also raise the question 'representative of what?' Asylum seekers are both a diverse and a temporary population, features which are challenging to the notion of representation. This raises important issues relating to the diversity of asylum seekers' experiences and its methodological implications. Whilst sharing a common legal status, dispersed asylum seekers come from a vast range of ethnic, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, which shape their experiences of persecution and flight. Other factors, such as language, literacy and existing co-ethnic communities and cultural knowledge, also shape the experiences of dispersal and life in the UK. Malkki's (1995: 496) argument against the notion of a 'refugee experience', that forced population movements have extraordinarily diverse historical and political causes and involve people who, while all displaced, find themselves in qualitatively different situations and predicaments, applies equally to the idea of a 'dispersed asylum seeker'. The challenge therefore is to recognise the diversity of experiences whilst remaining able to make an analysis based on specific case study material. Jacobsen and Landau (2003) raise a number of methodological concerns relating to research with refugees, arguing particularly that there are often problems of representativeness relating to small scale studies and sampling methods. Yet they also acknowledge the difficulties and therefore the importance of being explicit about the limitations of claims. It is also important for ethical reasons not to present research findings as if they were representative of a totality of experience, particularly when making recommendations for policy or practice, since this may have unintended negative impacts for those whom the research is intended to help.

The background information available for this study was limited; there are figures on the main ethnic groups housed in Glasgow (not broken down by area), and the numbers housed in council wards. These provide a useful broad overview, but no detailed information from which a sample could have been drawn. The approach taken in this study is to try and highlight the important issues uncovered whilst acknowledging the limitations of the material. It does not claim to be representative, but takes a similar stance to that of Brekke (2004: 14) who argues that his study does

not strive for representation, but rather aims to describe and analyse some of the ways of managing the asylum period that are definitely represented among the population. Korac (2003: 54) takes a similar approach, arguing that the narratives used in her study of refugees in exile in Italy and the Netherlands do not claim to be representative of the situation of all refugees in these countries, but are rather demonstrative of the complexity of the process of integration and the problems of how to facilitate it. These issues relating to sampling are discussed further below in relation to each of the methods used, the problems that were encountered and the efforts and success at overcoming these problems.

### *Gender*

The difficulties of researching a 'hard-to-access' population had a specific gender dimension in this research. There were a number of features of the research process which led to the majority of involvement being with asylum seeking and refugee women, whilst the interaction with men was limited by comparison. The user groups at both community groups at which the participant observation was carried out were mainly women. This reflected both the activities on offer, such as shopping, crafts, and after school play for children, which might naturally tend to attract more women, but also the fact that it was often more difficult for women to attend college instead due to the limited availability of childcare. There were also ways in which it was easier for me, as a female researcher, to interact with the women, as the women often remained in separate groups from the men, making it more difficult to approach the men. This was not always the case and it was possible to talk to men, or get to know couples, but it was a contextual issue. Although attempts were made to address this gender imbalance when interviewing, it must be acknowledged that this remained a difficulty and a potential source of bias. It should also be noted, however, that service providers did point out that women often faced specific difficulties (also noted in the literature review), which are discussed in the data chapters in relation to the asylum process and integration.

### ***Gatekeepers***

Gatekeepers can often play a particularly important role in accessing ‘hard-to-reach’ populations. The details of the access to the participant observation settings are discussed in more detail below. Gatekeepers, however, played a role in this study through facilitating access to the community groups, interviewees and meetings, and the extent of participation that was possible in each instance. The ways in which gatekeepers can restrict access are often noted, as Lee (1993: 124) comments, for example, gatekeepers often allow researchers into a setting, but use formal agreements and procedures in order to control their activities. In this study, however, the role of gatekeepers was largely extremely positive and helpful. Gatekeepers in this context refers to those who organised the community groups at which participant observation took places, other service providers who organised meetings and those who were willing to help by providing contact details for potential interviewees. Within the fieldwork settings, there were no restrictions and additional assistance was provided in terms of access to documents, facilitating interviews and attending additional meetings and events. Had those in organisational roles been less accommodating and helpful, it is likely that the data gathered would have been far less rich. In some cases, there were restrictions in that permission was given to observe meetings but it was not possible to take notes. On the whole, however, there were few obstacles of this type. The access process is discussed further below in relation to the different stages of the data collection process.

### ***‘Snowball’ Research Strategies***

Jacobsen and Landau (2003: 12) note that, due to the difficulties of access when researching forced migrants, most researchers rely on ‘snowball’ sampling approaches. They suggest a typical approach is to contact a local body such as a religious or refugee organisation and request their assistance in identifying and approaching potential research subjects in the community who are then asked to name others who might be willing to be interviewed. Although that method was not exactly replicated in this study, the research process did begin by working through

groups and all those interviewed were asked to suggest other potential interviewees (with varying degrees of success). It is therefore worth considering the advantages and disadvantages of this approach as well as its successes and failures in the context of this research.

Jacobsen and Landau (2003: 12-13) note the ethical and methodological problems. Unless done very carefully a snowball selection approach runs a high risk of producing a biased sample. There are also ethical concerns, as they argue that it runs a high risk of revealing critical and potentially damaging information to members of a network. Atkinson and Flint (2001) also consider the use of snowball research strategies for hidden and 'hard-to-reach' populations, arguing that it offers real benefits. A number of difficulties are acknowledged: snowball samples raise problems regarding representativeness and sampling principles, finding respondents and initiating 'chain referral' can be difficult, and engaging respondents as informal research assistants requires care to be taken with regards to confidentiality and trust (Atkinson and Flint, 2001: 2ff). Nonetheless, it is argued that snowballing is valuable in obtaining respondents where they are few in number or where some degree of trust is required, and snowball based methodologies are a valuable tool in studying the lifestyles of marginalised groups.

In this research, attempts were made to use snowball sampling as a means of increasing the numbers of asylum seeker interviewees and to gain suggestions for further stakeholder interviews. With asylum seeker interviews, as discussed further below, success was limited as only in one case did this produce further contacts or interviews. With the stakeholder interviews, it was useful as a verification method as there was a good deal of overlap in the suggested further contacts from each participant. In some cases participants also provided contact information that I had not been able to find, thus facilitating the access process.

### ***3.2.2 Participant Observation***

The initial and longest phase of the research process, from November 2005 to March 2007, involved participant observation in two church-based community groups in the

North Glasgow area. The importance of churches in the integration process in Glasgow has been highlighted in Scottish research (Barclay et al., 2003, Wren, 2004). This section discusses how access was initiated and developed over the course of the research, my involvement and activities, the ethical implications of this type of research, the difficulties of balancing different roles in the research process, the forms of data generated and the overall advantages and disadvantages.

The initial access to these groups was arranged by contacting one organisation by letter and the other by email. I explained that I would like to join their groups as a volunteer, and to combine this with research by participating in their activities and with the longer-term aim of arranging interviews. A two page summary of the research outlining the background, research methods and research questions was provided. In both cases there was a quick response agreeing in principle and meetings were then arranged to have an informal chat and confirm arrangements. The initial access to the organisations was therefore organised in a straightforward manner over a short period of time. Access, however, must be considered as an ongoing process, and as Lee (1993) notes, there is a distinction between physical access and social access. The British Sociological Association Statement of Ethical Practice (2002: 3), emphasises that, in research contexts involving field research, consent should be regarded as a process subject to renegotiation over time, particularly during prolonged periods of fieldwork where participants may forget that they are being studied. There was therefore a continuing process of getting to know the people who came in to the drop-in sessions and explaining the dual nature of my presence there. Where the opportunities arose, the reasons for my presence were explained in individual conversations. Although this became easier over time, as people became more used to my presence and more relaxed in speaking to me, due to the shifting composition of those using the services it was not possible for everyone there to be aware that I was carrying out research. Language and communication barriers presented additional obstacles to explaining the research and gaining individual consent. Access and consent have to be considered within these limitations. It was always possible, however, for people to choose not to engage with me, or to limit the nature of their interactions. As circumstances changed and I began

to undertake interviews, it was necessary to renegotiate consent for that stage of the research process.

Outlining the different activities and ways in which I was involved gives some indication of what participant observation meant within the context of this research. Each week one and a half days were spent in the two centres (two sessions at one location and one at the other) in addition to attending meetings and social events as these arose. These other events included a Framework for Dialogue (FFD) meeting, a 'No Borders' meeting as part of the process of setting up Unity (a direct action campaign group), two North Glasgow Integration Network Open Days, a Refugee Week Ceilidh sponsored by the FFD, a Unity rally on International Migrant Rights Day, and other social events. Regular activities comprised the setting up and running of a second-hand goods shop, English classes, a craft group, a computing class and an after-school session for parents and children. The different activities provided for a range of different forms of interaction with people in different contexts. This was important as, although based on regular contact, building up relationships took a considerable amount of time and it was often hard to get past formalities. Working through two different groups was helpful in this regard as there was some overlap in the users and seeing people in more than one context facilitated relationship building. As it was not possible to take notes during the sessions themselves, these were written up as soon as possible afterwards. Burgess (1984: 167) suggests that one can distinguish between substantive, methodological and analytical field notes, and these elements were combined within the notes taken (and coded separately during the analysis process). The notes contained physical descriptions of the drop-ins, and accounts of events, situations and conversations. There were also methodological notes, reflections on my activities and role and the data collection process, and analytic points as these occurred in the transcribing of events.

A particular challenge, and one with ethical implications, was that of balancing the different roles of researcher and volunteer. It affected the capacity in which people saw me, and the ways in which my time was spent during the sessions. Bryman (2001: 300) cites Gans's (1968) classification of three roles that will be

employed at different times during the research process for different purposes. These roles are:

- Total participant – completely involved, resumes researcher stance once research has unfolded, and is then able to make notes;
- Researcher participant – participates, but only semi-involved so still able to function as a researcher;
- Total researcher – observation without involvement, for example at a meeting.

This typology represents the variations in roles at different times and during different activities. As noted above it was not possible to take notes during the sessions. However, the extended period of involvement, and the regular structure of the activities helped to counter any difficulties of recall. Although at times it felt frustrating to be caught up in activities that did not seem to directly contribute to the data collection, it could also be argued that these were indirectly useful in building positive relationships and generating goodwill that helped facilitate other aspects of the research process. There were also concerns that being in a volunteer role and therefore in a position of helping people, would risk creating a sense of obligation in people to participate in other aspects of the research process. As some people did refuse, or change their minds about interviews, this was not as much of a problem as may have been anticipated but it was still a concern that was noted in the field notes (for example: field notes, June 2006) and one of the difficulties in moving to the interview stage of the research. There were also difficulties in maintaining the boundaries between research and friendship, when trying to get to know people and establish rapport, but with an instrumental purpose. This was particularly evident among those who may have been lonely or had other difficulties. Jacobsen and Landau (2003) note the difficulties of leaving the field after extended involvement, and the risk of creating unmet expectations. I chose to move from regular to less regular attendance prior to leaving and maintained contact by occasional visits and contacts with a few individuals.



The participant observation generated a range of data comprising field notes (including those from additional meetings and events), evaluation questionnaires from one drop-in and documents such as minutes and annual reports. It brought an understanding of how needs changed over the dispersal period and an awareness that services have had to respond to these changes. While change and adaptation was an important theme, there was also a sense in which lack of change was important as progress on people's cases was typically slow throughout most of the observation period. This was also brought out in interviews that noted that the need for emotional support was at least as important as that for practical assistance. Observation frequently highlighted the impact that the asylum system has on individuals and the strain of waiting for a decision. Frustration and anxiety were frequently expressed at waiting, and particularly at being unable to work. In terms of integration the material gathered provided evidence on the role that community services can play, the support networks that are available, the need for purposeful activity and attitudes towards living in Glasgow. It also demonstrated the difficult nature of integration as tensions could arise between volunteers and service users, although these often arose from difficulties in client-service provider relations rather than necessarily any negativity towards asylum seekers or integration. Recognition of difference by groups and individuals can also be important in acknowledging and recognising different needs. Participant observation was also important in providing opportunities for observing and discussing the support networks that were available to different asylum seekers. Connections between co-ethnic and language groups appeared strong and were an important source of support. The observation indicated that effective integration work can often involve support for one group rather than encouraging mixing between different groups as, although open to all local residents, the services were mainly used by asylum seekers and refugees.

The use of participant observation, and basing it within these particular drop-in groups, had a number of advantages and disadvantages. Some disadvantages have been noted above in relation to ethical concerns, the difficulties in balancing roles, and the time-intensive nature of this aspect of the research process. Investing considerable time and effort in this work provided much material on certain aspects of dispersal and integration processes in Glasgow, while limiting understanding of

others, though this would always be an outcome of choices made during the research process. Jacobsen and Landau (2003: 11) note that work with urban refugees belonging to a particular church or welfare organisation, in a particular part of the city, is not representative of all urban refugees, and that this has important implications for policy recommendations. There were a number of advantages, however, in having access to a wide range of people over a sustained period of time, which allowed deeper understanding of people's experiences. It also allowed a contribution to be made to the work that was ongoing, which was commented on positively, in contrast to the activities of other researchers who normally come in and out quickly. Gaining first-hand experience of some of the integration work that is going on allowed greater understanding of its successes and obstacles, and an understanding across a period of time. The ways in which interview material supplemented and interacted with this data are now discussed further.

### **3.2.3 Interviews**

Interviews were included within the research design for a number of reasons, to supply information that was not available through the participant observation, and to learn about the experiences and perceptions of those in different kinds of positions and roles from those involved in the community groups. Mason (2002: 63ff) suggests a range of reasons for choosing to use qualitative interviews of which the following are significant for this study: an interest in people's perceptions, understandings, experiences and interactions which can only be constructed or reconstructed in interviews; a view of explanations and arguments which places emphasis on depth, roundedness and complexity; to add a different dimension and approach questions from a different angle. Mason (2002: 64) also points out that the interview method is heavily dependent on people's capacities to verbalise, interact, conceptualise and remember, and if one is interested in knowledge as situational, then it is important to ask situational rather than abstract questions. Bearing these points in mind, this section discusses the role of interviews in the data collection process considering who was interviewed, access and consent, the types of questions asked and

reflections on the interview process, anonymity and confidentiality, and the types of data generated. These issues are considered first in relation to the interviews carried out with those who arrived in Glasgow as asylum seekers, and then in relation to the interviews with service providers and policymakers.

Within the ethnographic phase of the research, moving from participant observation to interviews proved difficult. In some ways the greater awareness of people's circumstances and difficulties inhibited efforts to try and engage them in the research in a more formal manner. A number of efforts were made to obtain interviews, usually drawing on personal contacts or information provided by contacts. The initial requests were made with the assistance of the coordinator at one drop in, who was able to provide a space for interviews and who also had greater knowledge of people's circumstances and whether it might be an inappropriate time to request an interview. Efforts were also made to assure people that they were free to refuse to participate. Four interviews were initially arranged in this way although ultimately only two were carried out. Of the other two, the personal circumstances of one interviewee prevented the interview from taking place and the other changed her mind regarding further involvement in the research. A further interview was arranged directly with another user at the drop-in, which also did not take place due to non attendance. Although those interviewed were asked if they could suggest anyone else who might agree to be interviewed, and agreed to do so, this did not lead to any further contacts. With others at the drop-in who I knew well, interviews were not arranged as repeated conversations had already elicited large amounts of information similar to that which would have been asked in an interview. A different approach was taken at this point; contact was made initially by email and then by telephone with an individual suggested through a personal contact. An interview was successfully arranged, and this interviewee later provided a list of six names of further potential interviewees. Of these, one further interview was arranged, one declined, and one agreed and then did not respond to efforts to confirm a time, and efforts to contact the others were unsuccessful. Four interviews were therefore carried out to supplement the data gathered from the participant observation, two of which were carried out in a room at the drop-in, one in a coffee shop and the other in

the participant's home. Three out of the four interviews were recorded and fully transcribed, while extensive notes were taken during the fourth.

In each case it was explained that the research was about integration and that the questions would be about their experiences of living in Glasgow, what had helped them to adjust and the process of getting to know people. A flexible schedule with a list of topics was used in each case (sample interview schedules are appended). In one interview the participant had gone through the research summary carefully prior to the meeting and we worked through both that and some additional questions. Post interview evaluations were written up afterwards to reflect on the interview process, and the interviews were transcribed or written up. The dynamics were quite different in the different interviews reflecting the different backgrounds of the participants. Two were active in integration activities, and had successful professional backgrounds. Thus, despite the personal nature of the topic, the rapport was in some ways similar to that of the stakeholder interviews. The interviews began by asking participants when they first arrived in Glasgow and their first impressions and questions then followed up on the answers from there. The interviews concluded by offering participants an opportunity to raise issues or make comments on anything that had not been raised so far.

In addition 13 further interviews (including one follow-up interview and one joint interview with two staff members at one organisation) were carried out with stakeholders in a range of organisations including community groups, education (schools and English language), policing, local government, community planning, project funding, the Home Office and the Scottish Government. The only approach to which there was no response was with a private housing provider that deals with a small proportion of the housing in Glasgow. Although this would have been interesting, information was available from documents and other interview sources. Approaches were made by email and when necessary confirmed by telephone. The purpose of the interview was explained in the email and a research summary provided. These materials can be found in the appendices. Participants were told that all information provided was confidential except for the purposes of academic research and dissemination, and attribution and anonymity were agreed on a case by case basis. A generic interview schedule was adapted for each interview, although

how closely this schedule was followed depended on the responses and the scope for follow up questions, and also on the degree of rapport as in more relaxed interviews it was not necessary to follow the schedule as closely as topics emerged during conversation.

A range of information was generated from these interviews, including information on the impact of policy and how integration is understood and facilitated. The impact of policies depends partly on how these policies are understood and negotiated within the local context. As the research was carried out in Glasgow, the legislative framework also has to be seen within the context of devolved powers. Stakeholder interview material includes the perspectives of those working within devolved services. Questions were asked regarding how the interviewee found the experience of dealing with reserved matters within a devolved context, and the links and working relationships with other organisations on the local, Scottish and UK levels. Frustration was frequently expressed at attitudes from Westminster, for example on integration, and at the powerlessness over issues such as dawn raids, and having to deal with changes beyond their own control. But the impact of policy is not only at the strategic end, but also at the everyday level, as attested by the interviews with both stakeholders and asylum seekers. Many issues have arisen from the length of time, up to seven years in some cases, for a final decision to be reached on an asylum case. Those working at the community level with asylum seekers spoke of the shift from providing practical to emotional support, as people reach the end of the process and in some cases are returned. For those still awaiting a decision there is the frustration of uncertainty, being unable to work and the constant balancing of settling but being in limbo. On integration, most interviewees were directly asked or volunteered their understandings of what integration means. There were a range of views, reflecting different organisational perspectives and roles. There was, however, a stress on distinguishing between integration and assimilation, with integration clearly seen as a two-way process. The difficulties of promoting integration for a group with temporary status were, however, acknowledged. It was, however, still seen as being worthwhile for a number of reasons as benefiting not only communities, but individuals themselves, whether they were given leave to remain or not. Interviews with asylum seekers also

highlighted the complexities of integration, and the lengthy nature of the process, although the views expressed towards Glasgow were generally positive.

Overall, the interviews provided data on a range of issues relating to asylum policy and process, and sources of support and integration. Information provided reflected the roles and position of each participant and some interviews generated considerably more information than others, as discussed further in Section 3.3. The advantages of the interviews were that they provided information not possible from observation, brought in strategic level views, and focused discussion of issues pertinent to the research. Disadvantages were varying success in eliciting information, a limited time to cover a large range of topics and in some cases restrictions placed on the information provided, as discussed further in Section 3.3.3. There are limitations relating to a reliance on constructing narratives, as interviews are dependent on participants' recall and present a particular perspective, which is why interviews were used in combination with the other methods discussed in this section.

#### ***3.2.4 The Use of Documents***

The final method for generating data was documentary analysis. This section discusses the documents that were accessed, the forms of data gathered and their strengths and limitations. Although many documents were useful in the process of designing and conducting the research, including legislation, responses to legislation from campaigning and refugee support groups and existing academic literature, documentary analysis is used primarily to refer to the use of policy documents from the UK and Scottish Governments on asylum policy and integration. Other key sources were the minutes and supporting documents from the Scottish Government Cross Party Group on Asylum Seekers and Refugees (2003-2007) and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) Refugees and Asylum Seekers Consortium (CRASC), later the Strategic Migration Partnership, (2004-2007). All of these documents, including the minutes, are available in the public domain and therefore there were no problems of access or consent.

The analysis undertaken of these documents was primarily a qualitative content-based analysis, defined by Bryman (2001: 180) as an approach where there is an emphasis on allowing categories to emerge out of the data and on recognising the significance for understanding meaning in the context in which an item being analysed (and the categories derived from it) appeared. The analysis concentrated on definitions, factual information about policy changes and policy implementation, and other key themes relating to dispersal and integration. Broadly speaking, the documentary analysis process involved taking notes from each document, and then going back through these notes making indications in the margins as to the key points in each section. These margin notes produced the first list of categories (or themes) that were then consolidated into a list to avoid repetition or overlapping categories as far as possible. These categories were then used as headings in writing up the notes into papers organised into analytic themes. These papers were then coded (or categorised) in NVivo alongside field notes and interview transcripts. The broader analytic framework for this coding process is discussed further below.

A range of useful information was elicited by this process. The detailed COSLA minutes provided important information on a number of issues such as the transition between accommodation contracts, the New Asylum Model and ongoing concerns such as destitution, and also referred to issues relevant to the reserved and devolved balance of powers. Documents indicated the difficult negotiation process for the new contract and concerns over the financing of support services. Part of the material concerned attempts to establish the factors behind destitution, which was seen as being both policy and process induced, and the extent of the problem in Glasgow. The Scottish Executive documents, particularly the supporting documents for the Scottish Refugee Integration Forum, elaborate on the Scottish understandings and perspectives on integration. These make it clear that in Scotland, integration is considered to be for both asylum seekers and refugees, by contrast to Home Office policy that integration cannot begin until leave to remain has been given. Other useful documents on integration were the Home Office Indicators of Integration (Ager and Strang, 2004b) and an evaluation of Integration Resources funding in Glasgow (FMR Research, 2006). These documents highlight a number of features about the ways in which integration was understood and put into practice which are

discussed throughout the thesis. In terms of the challenges of funding asylum work, the evaluation of the Integration Resources funding provides an indication of decisions on the way forward for funding integration work in Glasgow. Other important challenging issues which arise from the documents relate to mainstreaming, information provision and management, and A8 migration. The documents were also useful in identifying key figures within important policy networks, and issues that were important to clarify or follow up during the interviews. Existing research on attitudes towards asylum seekers also helped to contextualise the data on integration. While the use of documents is always limited by the fact that the documents have been produced for another purpose, this was moderated by being able to follow up on issues in interviews.

This section on data collection has discussed the three methods used in the course of this research, considered potential weaknesses and sources of bias, issues of access and consent and the types of data that were gathered during the different stages of the research. It has been argued that it was not appropriate to aim for representation in any statistical sense, given the inherent difficulties, but that it was important to be able to draw on a range of experiences and to understand their implications for dispersal policy and the concept of integration. Choices made during the research process have implications for the strength of the research findings and the potential limitations in terms of access have been acknowledged. The research, however, combines data from community, policy and strategic levels, involving participants who bring a range of different experiences and viewpoints, in understanding the processes of dispersal and integration.

### **3.3 DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION**

This section discusses the key issues relating to the analysis of the data collected through the processes discussed above, considering starting points, analytical frameworks, the use of NVivo which provides tools for qualitative data analysis, and combining data from different sources. Analysis was not an issue which was



discussed in depth in the original design, which noted only that it was likely that a combination of manual and computer-aided analysis would be undertaken, focusing on the identification of key concepts and relating these to theory on asylum seeker dispersal and integration processes. The analysis therefore very much developed as an ongoing iterative process from the refinement of the research questions, writing and working with the field notes, producing papers from documents, analysing the transcript and interview notes and writing up the material. There was no clear starting point to the analysis therefore, but rather a shift of emphasis from data collection to analysis. This section also discusses issues that arose in the presentation of the material given its sensitive and political nature, looking in particular at the issues of anonymity and confidentiality and the usage and presentation of quoted material. Finally, some issues relating to dissemination are noted.

### **3.3.1 Starting Points**

As indicated there was no clear starting point to the analysis, yet there were important stages in developing the analytic codes (which represent different ideas or concepts), the overall analytic themes and ultimately the structure of the thesis.

As discussed above, an initial coding framework for the various forms of data gathered was developed through the analysis of the documents; a similar process was also followed in analysing the field notes, with a preliminary field report written up around halfway through the participant observation. These categories served as a starting point when setting up the initial codes, or nodes<sup>4</sup>, in NVivo. The process of using NVivo is discussed further below. As the different forms of data were analysed, or even for each individual transcript or set of field notes, the coding structure was continually revised and updated as different strands emerged from the analytic process. The analytic codes were not static, but evolved with the analysis as an active part of the research process. Although data gathered in different ways may have fed more strongly into some codes or themes than others, the coding framework used was consistent across the documentary analysis, field notes and interview

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<sup>4</sup> Gibbs (2002: 243) defines nodes in NVivo as objects that represent an idea, theory, dimension, characteristic etc. of the data

transcripts. Mason (2002) draws attention to the fact that the systems of cataloguing that one uses to impose order on data are not analytically neutral. Although it may be regarded as a practical task, interpretation is required for the decisions regarding where divisions can be made amongst the material and what kind of thematic (and organisational) structure relates most effectively to the research questions. This initial organisation of the data into categories represents a preliminary stage in the data analysis. Silverman (2005: 177) cites Miles and Huberman's (1984) suggestion that data analysis consists of three concurrent flows of activity: data reduction; data display; and conclusion drawing/verification. This process involves transforming the raw data, deciding which areas will form the initial focus, organising the information into matrices or frameworks that clarify the main direction of the analysis and noting patterns and explanations, and then testing the plausibility or validity of these provisional conclusions.

The next stage following the initial coding was the development of the key analytic themes that would run through the thesis and the supporting evidence that could be provided for each theme. These were worked out in relation to the nodes that had been developed in NVivo, and how these related to each other. Writing was the final stage of the analysis, and the coding structure and analytic themes formed the basis of the thesis structure. Working out the overall structure of the thesis, and the individual chapter structures, required consideration of how each aspect fitted together to form a coherent argument. It also refined the argument in terms of adjustments that were necessary as to points that had enough supporting evidence or which became particularly pertinent in the writing process. I often referred to both the coded and uncoded material in order to relate the data excerpts back to their original context. The use of NVivo in developing the analysis and argument is now considered further.

### **3.3.2 Using NVivo**

The explanation of the starting points of the analysis above can be understood further by looking in more depth at the role of NVivo in the analysis process. A number of

general advantages and disadvantages of using computers to assist in the analysis are considered first and then its particular use within this research.

Robson (2002: 462) summarises a number of general advantages and disadvantages of using specialist data analysis programs. The advantages are; the provision of an organised single location storage space for all stored material; quick and easy access to material; handling large amounts of data very quickly; the programs force a detailed consideration of all text on a line by line or similar basis; and they help the development of consistent coding schemes. He suggests that disadvantages are that: proficiency in their use takes time and effort; there may be reluctance to change categories of information once these have been established; and particular programs may impose specific approaches to data analysis. As Gibbs (2002: 13) emphasises, however, such programs remain an analytic tool and the quality of the analysis depends on the work done by the researcher. However, it provides a way to find relations and patterns, and to bring structure to the data.

NVivo was used to code the interview transcripts, field notes and the papers written following the documentary analysis noted above. In relation to the field notes and documentary analysis it therefore built upon a process which had already begun manually. The headings for different themes within the data from the documentary analysis (for example, destitution) formed a starting point, and others were added throughout the process of analysis. NVivo was used to build a coding framework through the development of different nodes (or groupings), some of which contained different sub-nodes on different strands within that broad topic. The node on 'asylum policy and process' for example, contained separate sub-nodes on 'the new contract' and the 'new asylum model'. Each individual document including, transcripts, notes and documentary analysis papers, was analysed in turn, highlighting sections of the data and assigning these to different nodes. Each node therefore comprised a separate document consisting of information on the same theme from a variety of sources. A number of supplementary documents were also created, including a project diary, a coding diary, and memos and notes on analytical ideas and points relating to the data as these occurred. My experience was that it promoted a closer understanding of the data and a means of focusing in and thinking it through in relation to the different themes. Although I used only a small part of its capability (which helped with the

issue of proficiency), NVivo proved useful not least as an organisational tool, but also in providing a more integrated analysis through the ease with which it was possible to make links and cross reference between different data sources. The nodes helped in the development of the thesis table of contents and rereading each relevant node prior to writing the individual chapters helped to strengthen and formulate the issues to be addressed in each chapter. Having the material from the different sources organised thematically helped in linking together the material collected in different ways.

Having discussed the ways in which the process of data analysis was undertaken, issues relating to the presentation of the material are now discussed considering anonymity and confidentiality, the selection and presentation of quotations and dissemination, before an overall summary and reflections on the research design and practice.

### ***3.3.3 Issues of Anonymity and Confidentiality***

The research dealt with a sensitive political issue and involved a vulnerable group. Anonymity and confidentiality were issues of particular concern, both in terms of the undertakings towards the participants and how the material is presented in the thesis. The difficulties of informed consent were noted above, similarly anonymity and confidentiality are neither straightforward nor can they be taken for granted. It is difficult to anticipate the consequences of writing about peoples' experiences and, while they may be anonymous to an outsider, it is harder to disguise identities from those within the field. In terms of anonymity, it was agreed with asylum seeker participants that no names would be used (although some would not have minded). An initial and the country of origin were used to attribute these quotations or paraphrases. With regard to the stakeholder interviews all agreed to be named by job title, or their broader area of work. It was agreed that all material from interviews would be confidential except for the purposes of academic research and dissemination, although in practice there were variations in participants' preferences,

both overall and with regards to different parts of the same interview. Confidentiality was primarily an issue for the material gathered from the stakeholder interviews, although it did come up throughout.

The question of confidentiality could be summarised by three different approaches: sensitive but already in the public domain; ‘in between’ material not off the record but ‘I would prefer if you didn’t attribute this to me’; and ‘just between us’ material which is off the record. Examples of the first include critiques of the Home Office from two different interviewees, which might be considered politically sensitive, but which have already been publicly stated, or which are considered as being well evidenced. The attitude of one interviewee was ‘it’s your transcript’. The example of an ‘in-between’ situation comes from an interview with a public sector worker, which was not recorded, but where the interviewee was sent the notes after the interview. Some information was then highlighted in the notes as not for attribution. During the interviews there were also times when answers were prefaced by saying ‘just between us’ or similar remarks with varying motivations for this caution. In some cases it arose from constraints on what those working in the public sector are able to say, for example due to the need to maintain political neutrality, or caution when expressing views on campaign groups. There was also a concern for when and what types of information should be released into the public domain due to the often delicate processes and negotiations to resolve issues that might arise relating to dispersal and integration. Examples were noted where information had been used in particular ways by campaign groups, and as a result it was felt that it was not always best to have a public debate. Where a clear preference regarding confidentiality or attribution was expressed this must be respected. It is more complicated, however, where there might be information which was off the record for one interviewee, but on the record for others. While this could be useful in cases where the preference was not for the confidentiality of the material, but for non-attribution, it raises a difficult issue where in some cases and not others, it was felt the material was best kept confidential. In these cases a careful judgement had to be made as to how vital the particular piece of information might be to the argument that is being made, but given the sensitive nature of the topic it was considered best to adopt a cautious approach and such information was generally not used directly in

the text, although it was coded and formed part of the analysis. A related issue, particularly with regards to attribution, that of the selection and presentation of quotations is now discussed further.

### ***3.3.4 Selection and Presentation of Quotations***

There are a number of issues relating to the selection and attribution of quotations which relate not only to anonymity and confidentiality, but also to how quotations are selected and used (and edited) to contribute to and illustrate the arguments.

One question is how much information is needed to contextualise the excerpt and is useful to the reader. Hopkins (1993: 123) notes that there is a dilemma between protection of participants, and the provision of details crucial to the usefulness of the research. The ways in which the quotations have been attributed was indicated above. There may also be instances where people interviewed are speaking in more than one capacity, for example, referring to both their personal and professional experiences. I considered using different identifiers for the excerpts to represent one interviewee's different roles, but ultimately decided to retain only one, although in some sections that does mean consecutive repeated quotations from the same participant. An identifier may also be problematic in some contexts but not others, not necessarily for the participants themselves but by possibly indicating the identities of others who may have participated in the research.

There is a further question relating to how far one should edit quotations. Corden and Sainsbury's (2006: 105) research on participants' views on the use of quotations found that there were sharp differences of opinion on the amount of editing and tidying up of spoken words that should be done by the researcher. Some felt that it was important that the words were not changed in any way; others felt there might be disadvantages relating to perceptions of the participants if no changes were made. In order to allow the participant's voices to come across clearly, in the ways in which they chose to express themselves, editing of quotations has been done only to aid clarity, where words have been taken out or inserted this has been indicated, and words were not changed.

Quotations can be used both to build the argument and to illustrate the points being made. Throughout the data chapters I have tried to make it clear where quotes are illustrative of a broader argument, or represent a unique but interesting viewpoint. Corden and Sainsbury (2006: 98) found that the inclusion of verbatim quotations helps to clarify the links between data, interpretation, and conclusions. In this way quotations help to strengthen the argument, but there are also questions relating not only to how the quotations are presented, but also how they are selected. Some interviewees may articulate points more powerfully, or use language which speaks more directly to the concepts under discussion. It is therefore likely that these will be drawn on more often than those interviewees who express themselves less clearly. I would argue that as all the material is used in building the analysis, although some may be used more for the purposes of illustration, repeated citations from the same interviewee are not problematic in terms of producing any potential bias. Nonetheless, it was an issue to which my attention was drawn, and a table has been appended which shows the frequency and distribution of quoted and paraphrased material, both per chapter and overall. This table indicates that although more use may be made of some interviewees in some chapters, overall there is a broad spread from which verbatim and paraphrased material has been drawn.

The issues noted above relating to anonymity, confidentiality, and the use of quotations, and the broader ethical questions relating to the sensitive and political nature of the research, are also pertinent to the question of dissemination. Potential audiences include participants in the research, policymakers and academic audiences through the publication of journal articles. A number of those interviewed expressed an interest in seeing the finished work and will be offered an opportunity to read the thesis. One concern is to ensure that the findings are not used in any negative way for an already stigmatised group. The Social Research Association (2003: 17) note, however, that the fact the information can be misconstrued or misused is not a convincing argument against its dissemination. Lee (1993: 191) cites Johnson's suggestion for an ethical proofreading of manuscripts, asking questions about what is to be revealed, the possible positive and negative uses to which the findings can be put and whether the revelations are worth the possible consequences. Lee (1993: 192) notes, however, that the consequences or reactions to publication may be

delayed or indirect. The issues raised throughout this chapter relating to representation, anonymity and confidentiality have been considered throughout in the preparation of the material for this thesis and will be reflected on again for any other formats in which it may appear.

## **CONCLUSION**

This chapter on the research design and practice has aimed to provide a transparent and reflexive account of the decisions that were made throughout the process of this research on the integration of dispersed asylum seekers. Ethical concerns have been paramount and have been raised throughout this account. The initial decision to carry out a qualitative context-based study was discussed, and the choices of participant observation, interviews and documentary analysis explained. Some variations from the initial decisions were noted, particularly the shift of emphasis from a horizontal to a vertical comparison. Potential limitations relating to hard-to-access populations were noted and the possible biases which may arise. Each stage of the research process was then discussed in more depth considering issues of access, consent, the forms of the research activity and the types of data which were generated. Some problems were noted, the difficulties of balancing roles in the participant observation process and in moving from observation to interviews. The analysis was then discussed considering the thematic structures for analysis that were built up and the ways in which using NVivo facilitated this process. Difficult ethical and methodological issues relating to the presentation of the material were then discussed, in particular anonymity and confidentiality and the selection and presentation of quotations. In general, decisions were taken, because they were thought to represent the best course of action at that time, although hindsight may produce different reflections. Whilst contingent factors such as research relationships in the field may have made some aspects of the research more difficult, other valuable opportunities became available providing new contacts and insights. Overall, the data has strengths and weaknesses reflecting both the methods selected and the ways in which these were employed, and three significant analytic themes emerged relating to the impact of policy on stakeholders, challenges, and defining



and promoting integration which are addressed throughout the following five data chapters.

## 4. RESERVED POLICY IN A DEVOLVED CONTEXT

### INTRODUCTION

Asylum policy is a complex and fluid area, with a crucial impact not only on the experiences of asylum seekers, but also on other stakeholders<sup>5</sup> working within policy and service provision. This chapter sets out the key features of asylum legislation and policy, and evaluates how these policies affect the experiences of asylum seekers in Glasgow and those working with them. The chapter therefore addresses the key analytic theme of the impact of policies on target groups and stakeholders. The focus of this chapter is on stakeholders, with the effects on asylum seekers discussed in Chapter 6. A discussion of asylum policy within the Scottish context is complicated by the intersection of the reserved immigration policy with the provision of devolved services to asylum seekers. It is therefore important to give consideration to how the devolved context affects the implementation and impact of the reserved policy. There are important differences between the position in Scotland and the rest of the UK, as in Scotland integration is considered to begin from the day of arrival rather than the day on which status is granted.<sup>6</sup> This chapter therefore not only critically analyses asylum policy, but also considers how its implementation is affected by the distinctiveness of the Scottish context and approach.

The analysis contextualises the issues for the integration of asylum seekers in Scotland and highlights issues that are considered in more depth in later chapters. It draws on interviews with those working in asylum policy and service provision, together with documentary analysis and existing literature. The UK framework of asylum policy and legislation is considered first, looking at important trends and developments. Asylum is now a highly legislated area, and there have been increasing restrictions and a focus on enforcement and deterrence rather than protection. One important development is the implementation of the New Asylum

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<sup>5</sup> As defined in the introduction, stakeholders are those who have an interest in the operation of dispersal and who may be in policy or service provision roles.

<sup>6</sup> These differences were explicitly stated in interviews with both Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Executive.

Model (NAM) which aims to greatly speed up the asylum decision-making process; Section 4.1 includes a discussion of the views of Scottish stakeholders on its implementation and impact. The Scottish context is then outlined looking at both the overall Scottish approach and then more specifically at Glasgow. The interaction between the reserved and devolved levels is then analysed. Working relationships and areas of tension are noted, using examples such as dawn raids and different approaches to education, to make an overall assessment of how the reserved/devolved balance relates to asylum and its effects on stakeholders.

## 4.1 THE UK LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The legislative framework for asylum in the UK has developed relatively recently, with no primary legislation prior to 1993. The pace of development, however, has been rapid, with four major pieces of legislation since 1997. Table 4 presents recent legislation, its key points and some concerns that have been raised in response to the changes introduced. Several trends can be noted (Bloch and Schuster, 2002, Sales, 2002, Schuster, 2003), an increasing concern to reduce numbers, the links with welfare and the pressure to speed up both decision making and the pace and numbers of removals.

**Table 4: Recent UK Asylum Legislation**

LEGISLATION	KEY FEATURES	CONCERNS RAISED
Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduced new right of appeal</li> <li>- Extended provisions of Carriers' Liability Act</li> <li>- Required immigration rules to be compatible with the 1951 Geneva Convention</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draconian legislation focused on reducing numbers</li> <li>- Made the asylum process more difficult for applicants</li> </ul>
Asylum and Immigration Act 1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reduced access to social services for certain asylum seekers which led to local authorities being responsible for those without any means of support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increased destitution for asylum seekers</li> </ul>
Immigration and Asylum Act 1999	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction of compulsory dispersal for asylum seekers unable to support themselves</li> <li>- Creation of separate support system for asylum seekers, the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Isolation from community support</li> <li>- Marginalisation and stigmatisation through the voucher system</li> </ul>

	National Asylum Support Service (NASS), initially through the provision of vouchers, now on a cash basis. - Creation of a single appeal stage	
Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002	- Removal of in-country appeals for cases considered clearly unfounded - Restriction of access to judicial review - Wider powers to exercise the use of detention and removal - Withdrawal of support for applicants who did not apply for asylum as soon as reasonably practicable.	- Concerns over curtailment of access to due process - Risk of increasingly widespread destitution amongst asylum seekers.
Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants etc) 2004	- Entering the UK without a passport to be a criminal offence - Establishment of behavioural criteria that can undermine applicant's credibility - Power to remove support from refused families who fail to co-operate with removal instructions - Unification of appeals system	- Risks penalising applicants for fleeing persecution - Asylum seekers may find compliance with procedures difficult due to traumatic experiences - Removal of support breaches humanitarian obligations - Risks reducing access to a fair hearing
Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006	- Mostly concerned with immigration and nationality as asylum measures to be implemented through NAM and do not require primary legislation - Expanded provision of Section 4 <sup>7</sup> support	- See NAM section below - Levels of support remain low

The table draws on briefings from the Scottish Refugee Council (2004) and the Refugee Council (2002, 2005) to present concerns raised by the legislation. Drawing on the information presented in the table, the following sections evaluate UK legislation and policy, looking first at the framework for the dispersal of asylum seekers put into place by the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (IAA), then at changes introduced by post-IAA legislation and policy. In keeping with the analytic theme of the impact of policy on stakeholders, the discussion of UK policy and legislation considers how these changes have affected dispersed asylum seekers and

<sup>7</sup> Section 4 support is provided to unsuccessful applicants who are unable to be returned due to circumstances beyond their own control, it provides accommodation and subsistence level support in the form of vouchers.

those working with them. There have also been important changes that have not required new legislation, such as the removal of automatic Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) for refugees and the introduction of the New Asylum Model (NAM). The key features of the NAM and its impact to date are discussed, providing the background for the subsequent analysis of the Scottish context.

#### **4.1.1 The Development of UK Policy: Dispersal and Restriction**

UK asylum policy is a highly politicised issue, with fast moving policy shifts and development. This section highlights key features of the policy framework and considers the ways in which such policies and the resulting changes affect the contexts (in this case Scotland) in which the policies are implemented. The impact of the IAA and the establishment of dispersal are discussed first, followed by post-IAA reform and change.

Under the IAA, those asylum seekers with no means to support themselves, who would otherwise be destitute, are given accommodation and support allocated on a no choice basis at dispersal locations around the country. Table 5 shows the 10 locations supporting the highest numbers of asylum seekers as of December 2007, with Glasgow the local authority accommodating the largest number.

**Table 5: Major Asylum Dispersal Locations**

<b>Top Ten Dispersal Locations by Local Authority as of December 2007</b>	
Glasgow	3905
Birmingham	1960
Leeds	1760
Manchester	1310
Newcastle upon Tyne	1245
Cardiff	1100
Liverpool	1010
Nottingham	1000
Sheffield	990
Salford	910

*Source:* Home Office Asylum Statistics: 4th Quarter 2007 United Kingdom  
 Figures include dependents and are provisional and rounded to the nearest 5.

Prior to the IAA, asylum legislation in the 1990s had progressively shifted the costs of supporting asylum seekers onto local authorities, with the majority of asylum seekers residing in London and the South East of England. The aims behind the IAA were to reform a system that had become ‘messy, confusing and expensive’ (Home Office, 1998: s.8.14) by creating a system that would ‘ensure that asylum seekers are not left destitute, minimise the incentive to economic migration, remove access to social security benefits, minimise cash payments and reduce the burden on local authorities’ (Home Office, 1998). Dispersal was intended to more evenly spread the costs of supporting asylum seekers, which had previously largely been borne by authorities in the South East of England. A number of concerns were raised following the IAA’s introduction of the dispersal scheme, regarding both its implementation and the nature of the system itself. As noted in Table 4, a major concern has been the isolation of asylum seekers from social networks and community support. Zetter et al (2005: 172) note that dispersal had a profound and enduring impact upon Refugee Community Organisations (RCOS), fracturing connections. It was suggested (Boswell, 2001, Audit Commission, 2000) that a system driven by the availability of accommodation may not take sufficient account of the support needs of asylum seekers. The provision of vouchers rather than cash support was also a hugely problematic issue, leading to a large campaign against the stigmatisation and marginalisation that the system created for asylum seekers. The centralized nature of decision making in the asylum system has also been problematic. Kelly (2002: 3) notes that the creation of NASS reduced the capability of local authorities to plan and prepare for dispersal. In the case of Glasgow, the local council was unable to decide for the first 9 months where asylum seekers should be housed (Kelly, 2002: 9). The need for improved consultation and involvement with the regions was also acknowledged by the Government (Home Office, 2002). The view of stakeholders in Scotland is that there have been great improvements in partnership working and consultation since the early days of dispersal. As indicated in the literature review (Section 2.1.2), Dawson (2002: 13) found that although early research showed that dispersal failed in its central aims of burden sharing, control and deterrence, many problems with dispersal policy and its implementation were transitional, and the quality of welfare in dispersal sites has improved.

By setting up a separate system of accommodation and vouchers, the IAA introduced a radical change in how asylum seekers are supported. There has, however, been continuing political dissatisfaction (as well as ongoing concern from other stakeholders) with the asylum system. Only two years after the implementation of dispersal, in the White Paper 'Secure Borders, Safe Haven' (Home Office, 2002), the government acknowledged that the system was in need of substantial improvement. Although the dispersal framework itself has remained largely unchanged, there have been changes in support and in the processing of asylum applications. Cash support was reinstated for asylum seekers in April 2002, although vouchers are still provided to unsuccessful applicants who cannot be returned home. Provision was made to remove support from those who do not make an application as soon as possible on entry to the UK (a policy which is not currently enforced, but which remains on the statute books). Concerns have also been expressed by some stakeholders that destitution is being used as a policy tool to increase compliance with removals. Together with the focus on welfare provision within the asylum system, the length of time taken to reach a decision and access to justice throughout this process have been of continuous concern. These issues have been addressed in various ways through the streamlining of the appeals process, and the introduction of the NAM (see below), which aims to process asylum seekers through the system in six months, whether the outcome is a positive decision or removal after a final appeal. All of these changes have had an impact not only on asylum seekers, but on those working with them. As this comment from a service provider demonstrates, dealing with these changes can create a sense of frustration:

*I think one of the real difficulties with this area is you're working where a lot of the things that you're having to deal with are outwith your control, the Home Office for example. And the change in accommodation contracts for example, nobody in their right minds would have planned that to happen, but it did and we had to deal with it and there's been lots of other things like that that you've had to deal with ... you know, changes in asylum policy (Education Provider)*

The frequent changes in asylum legislation and regulation impact on stakeholders, not only through the difficulties of adjusting to these changes, but also through the increased complexity of the system. An initial consultation by the UK Borders

Agency on simplifying immigration law began in June 2007; a move which one interviewee hoped would have a positive outcome:

*Fantastic, if we can simplify this down and we can make it far more user friendly for everyone concerned. I don't mean just asylum seekers, I don't understand most of the immigration legislation. They come out with decisions and I think how did that happen?... Policies changed, procedures changed and everything's just been added on and I do firmly believe its time for a full review of it all and I think that that will help us with the integration aspect. (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*

Reservations have also been expressed: a Scottish Refugee Council (2007b) response to the consultation, while welcoming a consolidation of a complex plethora of legislation, expressed concerns over a loss of flexibility and discretion for decision makers, and a possible reduction in accountability through increased use of immigration rules rather than legislation.

The asylum system has been through a series of rapid changes since the early 1990s, and debate continues with the UK Borders Act given royal assent in October 2007. The changes, and surrounding political rhetoric, have led to criticisms (Bloch and Schuster, 2002: 204) of the government for reinforcing the notion of large numbers of 'bogus' asylum seekers abusing the system. The separation of asylum seekers' welfare provision from the mainstream social security system and a focus on removals has contributed to a negative public image of asylum seekers. The frequent changes have also been difficult for service providers who have had to adjust to the new rules. As Boswell (2001) and others have noted, there are contradictory goals underlying the asylum system and its reform. These contradictions often relate to the issue of integration. In relation to the IAA, Boswell (2001:27) notes that there is a conflict between the goals of minimising social tension through dispersal, and discouraging the integration of asylum seekers. The problematic nature of promoting integration for asylum seekers within this framework is discussed further in Chapters 5 and 8. The replacement of the granting of Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) to refugees in August 2005 with a five year Refugee Leave undermines the Government's commitment to refugee integration by extending the uncertainty of immigration status. The recent changes introduced by the NAM are now discussed. As the NAM was implemented relatively recently, the discussion draws on interview material and is therefore focused on the impact within Scotland.



#### **4.1.2 The New Asylum Model**

The introduction of the NAM has the potential to greatly alter the experiences of asylum seekers and other stakeholders, and therefore the process of integration. Its main features are summarised below. It came into effect in January 2007 and is now fully operational in Scotland. All new applications since March 2007 are processed through the NAM and the backlog of existing cases is being reviewed through the Case Resolution Directorate in a process commonly referred to as the ‘legacy case review’. The key points of the NAM are:

- A new screening process to channel asylum applicants through a processing track tailored to the characteristics of their claim.
- Specialist case managers to process asylum applicant cases through the system from initial claim to integration or removal.
- Each processing track will have a clear strategy for maintaining contact with the applicant.
- Support arrangements for asylum seekers will be linked more closely to the management of the processing of the claim. (Home Office, February 2005)

At present only a small proportion of cases in Glasgow are being dealt with under the NAM. A senior manager at the Borders and Immigration Agency (BIA)<sup>8</sup> Scotland (referring only to family cases) noted in July 2007 that there were around 60 families (or 300-350 people) being dealt with under the NAM, out of the more than 5000 asylum seekers living in Glasgow at that time. It is therefore too early to fully assess the impact of the NAM, but stakeholders interviewed were able to speak about the effects so far and how they felt it would affect their work in the future. There were concerns over access to justice given the short timescales, and concern over the gender dimension:

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<sup>8</sup> Now the UK Border Agency

*On the one hand it recognises poor decision making and tries to improve it. On the other hand it doesn't go the full extra mile if you look at things like the gender dimension in NAM, where there's an agreement that women would be entitled to a female caseworker if they want one, but they're not enabled to ask for one. It is recognised that it is better if children are not present at initial interviews and in fact Home Office letters ask people not to bring their children, but they don't provide childcare – as yet. Although a lot of these developments are on the verge of happening, I think there's one big push needed to make some of that aspect of NAM fairer (Community Development Co-ordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

The increase in the speed of case processing was already visible, and issues relating to integration include information sharing, access to services and concern for the potential impacts on asylum seekers, issues that are discussed in more detail below. Concerns remain over the nature of the process itself, and the impact that increased removals may have:

*If it worked, the notion of good and accurate legal decisions being made quickly that benefit people is a good thing... the New Asylum Model offers an opportunity, but a greater risk and the risks outweigh the opportunity. I think the risks are fast crude brutal decisions, and faster cruder more brutal removals. (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

At the time when the interviews were carried out (summer 2007), there had not yet been many removals arising from NAM cases. Yet it was an issue that several stakeholders were anticipating, that would not only be distressing for families, but also disruptive for service providers:

*One of the things we thought was 'Are we going to end up with children who are here for six months then go, then another lot for six months?'. The removals bit hasn't really kicked in yet. It's really a bit early to say. (Education Provider)*

It is particularly difficult when service providers have been closely involved with a family and they quickly move on:

*I think the whole procedure already is and will certainly be much quicker, so I think that has an impact. I've seen that happen, a family come through that procedure and [are] either accepted and [they have] moved away again or decided to go back because they weren't accepted in a very short time. You know that was quite hard, [with] one particular family we got really involved and then their case was very quickly exhausted, and they decided they would go back to their country of origin... (Community Group Co-ordinator, Balornock)*

The speeding up of the process also has implications with regard to information sharing, not only do asylum seekers themselves need information on how to access

services, but the service providers also need information about new arrivals and their needs. In some cases the speed of the decision has disrupted this process:

*We've certainly seen some very very quick positive decisions. And in some cases decisions so quick that we haven't even managed to get the children into school. It's before they actually get into their dispersed accommodation, and anecdotally we've heard stories of people who get their positive decision so quickly they're suddenly thrown into this whole thing about housing. (Education Provider)*

*We had a couple of people that had been granted asylum [within about a month] and had gone off into the wilderness and that's a huge impact for us. Because if they've got problems they don't know who to go to with their problems, they don't even know the basics of housing and benefits and they'll be given some of it through the induction process but that's as far as they had got... (Chief Inspector Strathclyde Police)*

Moves to speed up the decision-making process are beneficial in reducing the difficult period waiting for an outcome. But the changes also create new challenges. As these interview extracts indicate, those who have been given a positive decision have had less time to adapt to their new environment and find out about new systems and a new way of life in a different country. It has also given service providers less time and opportunity to link people with services and to pass on information, a problem highlighted by the police:

*They wouldn't even know that if they had to come to the police for anything that we could arrange interpreters, that we could easily sit down and chat with them and discuss their problems. They wouldn't know what's right and wrong in this country, they wouldn't know whether it's acceptable for someone to call them a racist name...It must have been a very scary experience ... so that's the kind of impact that we had, making sure that people were getting the right support and not just abandoned in the community. (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*

The speeding up of the asylum process may also create changes, not only in providing access to services, but also in the types of services that are required. Both of these types of changes are illustrated in the education sector.

*[Once] the NAM is up and running, I think we'll see it going back to what it was, the non English speakers and you're trying to get them started, you know finding out about them, finding out what they know and getting them moved on into mainstream, whereas most of the children in schools now have been there for many years. Lots of them have had all their education in Scotland. (Education Provider)*

For schools the impact of the NAM may lead to something like a return to the early days of dispersal, with a higher turnover of students needing more specialised

support, by contrast to the current work with pupils, many of whom have been integrated into the mainstream classes. For further education, there are questions about access to English classes and maintaining high levels of support for refugees and asylum seekers in the face not only of a changing system, but also of increased demand due to European migration.

*If asylum seeker numbers start to drop, but we've got a hundred Poles on the waiting list first, I suppose we would still take them, we would need to think about it, we need to think about would we then jump asylum seekers to the head of the queue? We need to keep an eye on how the NAM works. I think it's really really important that if people do get refugee status that we get them in as fast as possible.... I'm wondering how we'll do it, its the logistics of it all. (ESOL provider, further education)*

The support work in Glasgow has largely developed around supporting a cohort of asylum seekers, many of whom faced a prolonged decision-making process. The targets set by the NAM will, of necessity, create some upheaval. Despite concerns over the operation and impact of the NAM, it is seen as a positive development in enabling people to receive decisions more quickly and move on with their lives. The concerns raised are partly a result of the process of dealing with change, and partly reflect the uncertainty over the potential effects of changing demographics on communities, as the turnover of asylum seekers is potentially much faster. Much of the integration expertise that has been built up in Glasgow remains relevant for work with refugees. Yet concerns were raised during interviews at how the changes might impact on integration:

*The impact then would be damaging on integration, because amongst a number of things, integration takes time and the indicators are partly about people working, about your kids at school, or your health or getting an education, but they're also about cultural and social bonds. These things take time to form and people have come from traumatic experiences... (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

An important part of minimising any potentially negative impact on integration will be the provision and sharing of information regarding the operation of the system,

access to services and on life in Scotland. Stakeholders tended to speak positively about partnership working as highlighted below:

*The New Asylum Model... came into effect in January this year and we're well ahead of target. Scotland is one of the better areas I would say and I think that's down to the fact that we are localised so almost all of the services are within one city. So when the New Asylum Model came here, the first thing we did was we got all the stakeholders round the table and we met and chatted which I don't think happens in any other part of the UK (Regional Manager, BIA Scotland)*

The quotation not only indicates that there is good communication between stakeholders in Scotland, but also makes it clear that the dispersal context is different in Scotland and that a different approach may therefore be taken to dealing with asylum policy. Section 4.2 discusses the Scottish context in more detail; Section 4.3 then draws on the discussion of the UK and Scottish policy contexts to evaluate the interaction of the different approaches through the implementation of the reserved policy within a devolved context.

## **4.2 THE SCOTTISH CONTEXT**

This section examines the Scottish policy approach, looking at areas where it has been possible to take action, before going on to consider some areas of tension in connection with the balancing of devolved and reserved responsibilities. As Table 6 demonstrates, there are clear constraints on the areas within which the Scottish Government<sup>9</sup> is able to take action on supporting asylum seekers.

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<sup>9</sup> Following the SNP win in the Scottish elections in May 2007, the Scottish Executive is now known as the Scottish Government. Executive has been retained when referring to the actions of previous administrations.

**Table 6: Devolution of Responsibility Affecting Implementation of Asylum Policy**

<b>SCOTLAND</b>	<b>UK</b>
Health	Immigration and Nationality
Housing and Planning	International Relations
Education and Training	Social Security
Interpretation and Translation	Equality
Policing and Prisons	Employment
Further Education	National Security
Legal Services and Legal Aid	
Social Work	
Law and Home Affairs	
Local Government	
Economic Development	

*Source:* Adapted from Cairney (2006: 431)

There are also, however, some areas of crossover where the boundaries become blurred as devolved services implement reserved policies, as well as providing support for asylum seekers. The following section looks briefly at how asylum policy has taken shape in the Scottish context, and at the response to dispersal in Glasgow, and finally at how the new accommodation contract has impacted on dispersal work in Glasgow.

#### ***4.2.1 The Scottish Government and the Scottish Refugee Integration Forum***

As Table 6 indicates, immigration is a policy area that is reserved to Westminster. Asylum seekers, however, come into contact with devolved policy areas through their contact with support services. This section considers how the role of the Scottish Government has developed since dispersal began, and looks briefly at the Scottish Refugee Integration Forum (SRIF) as an indicator of Scottish priorities and approaches. The involvement of the devolved administration has increased since the early days of dispersal when the reserved nature of asylum was regarded as preventing Scottish action. Barclay et al's (2003: 23) research on the impact of the IAA in Scotland found that the role of the Scottish Executive in shaping or

responding to developments, particularly in the early stages of dispersal, was minimal, although this had started to change by 2003. Cairney (2006: 441) argues that there were two important prompts in the shift towards more significant Scottish involvement: the murder of Firsat Dag, a Kurdish asylum seeker in the Sighthill area of Glasgow in August 2001, and the controversy over children in the Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre in 2003. The murder of Firsat Dag, which attracted nationwide media coverage, was pivotal in increasing support for community work in Glasgow. The response of the Executive included not only significant funding for integration work, but also setting up the SRIF in January 2002. After consultation with the public and voluntary sectors, SRIF developed action plans to promote the integration of asylum seekers and refugees and increase the availability and quality of services. The work of the SRIF is now outlined in more detail before going on to look at the response to dispersal in Glasgow.

When the SRIF was first convened its focus was on reasonable and practical actions that could be taken to improve the lives of asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland over a relatively short time-scale. The first action plan in 2003 (Scottish Refugee Integration Forum, 2003a), identified five cross-cutting issues that would underpin their key actions. These were to recognise and address racism, to identify best practice, to facilitate multi-agency working, to ensure the gathering of statistical and tracking information at the local and national level, and to take the lead in ensuring access to specialist services. The key actions concerned translation and interpretation; information and advice; community preparation; positive images, community development and the media; housing; justice, community safety and access to justice; children's services; health and social care; and enterprise, lifelong learning, employment and training. A progress report in 2003 (Scottish Refugee Integration Forum, 2003b) found that there had been progress on all cross-cutting issues and on most of the key actions, but there was still much to do as it was still only six months after the publication of the action plan. A more detailed progress report was published in 2005 (Scottish Refugee Integration Forum, 2005). This noted that much had been learned, not least that integration is a two-way process which benefits the host community. Progress had been made and Scotland could be regarded as an example of good practice, with strong work at the grassroots levels,

and on partnership working. The Scottish Executive had been unable to ensure that statistics could be gathered as they did not receive the necessary information. Projects with a translation and interpreting focus were a funding priority for the Scottish Executive Refugee Integration team in 2005/2006. It was noted that positive work had been done by local networks on information and advice. There was a need to assess asylum seekers and refugees' health needs, and there were still significant gaps in the delivery of appropriate training on asylum law and related matters. Increased support had been given to community preparation and to ensuring a strategic approach. It was felt there was still a need for a strategic body of senior officers to oversee the development of staff support and services. Much work had been carried out in other key action areas and substantial funding had been made available. The Scottish Executive liaised with the Home Office Refugee Integration Team on the best methods for evaluating refugee integration work. It had been suggested by the Forum that they adopt the Indicators of Integration (Ager and Strang, 2004b), a framework developed for measuring the integration process. It was found that at this time in 2005, there was a degree of anxiety amongst those involved in integration work, and uncertainty over the impact of the removal of automatic granting of indefinite leave to remain to refugees. The new SRIF documents, when available, should provide updated material on all these areas and reaffirm what are seen as priorities for integration in Scotland. There have of course been recent political changes in Scotland following the SNP victory in the May 2007 election, which may affect the way that work on asylum in Scotland is taken forward.

#### ***4.2.2 The Glasgow Response to Dispersal***

The aim of this section is to briefly outline the response to dispersal in Glasgow and provide the context for the more in-depth discussion in Chapters 5 and 8. The discussion considers the way the work has developed, and its strengths and weaknesses. The final part of this section then goes on to look at the impact of the new accommodation contract in Glasgow.

Glasgow City Council had some previous experience of housing asylum seekers prior to the IAA, having participated both in a voluntary dispersal scheme



and in the temporary protection programme for Kosovans. The scale and speed of dispersal under the IAA, however, had a huge impact on the city and arguably overwhelmed the initial preparations. As noted above, the centralised nature of NASS constrained the planning that could be undertaken in Glasgow. The initial period proved to be more difficult than had been anticipated. As one stakeholder noted:

*they arrived to a lot of negative media publicity and we experienced some pretty hard times actually round about then, particularly up in the likes of Sighthill where the local population ... were perhaps not the most socially accepting of asylum seekers at the time... We weren't prepared for that at all, we just didn't know that was going to happen. It did really culminate in the murder of Firsat Dag when everybody sat up and took notice (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*

As a result of the initial problems, a considerable amount of work has been done in Glasgow to improve community relations and support for asylum seekers. In part this has been a reflection of the different understanding of integration in Scotland, where it is seen to begin from the day of arrival rather than when leave to remain is granted. The differences were summed up during an interview at Glasgow City Council:

*The Home Office's view is that integration only starts when they're given status and what we've said is how can you keep people in a limbo for 5/6 years, how can you have young children born in Glasgow, brought up in Glasgow, speak English as their first language and somehow tell them that they can't integrate. We've always argued that that was a nonsense and ignored it, which did bring us into tensions at times with national government, but less so with the Scottish Executive and now the Scottish Government so we've always taken the view that people should be helped to integrate from day one. (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council)*

Much of the work that has been done in Glasgow has developed at the community level in response to the immediate needs of those living locally. Projects are often small and reactive and an industry has grown up around supporting asylum seekers since dispersal began. The strengths of this development were noted in an interview at the Scottish Government (Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration: May 2007) when it was referred to as a flexible and resilient sector. It is unstable, however, as the frequent changes in legislation mean changes for stakeholder organisations. The ad hoc nature of the asylum sector can also have disadvantages. The weaknesses were noted from a community planning perspective:

*There's a weakness about duplication, about complex funding streams not lining up priorities, so there is an industry here where people can go from project to project to project and never really get integrated, just stay in that kind of unique sector and not feel part of the mainstream, so there's some of the problems. (Glasgow Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

Making sure that the resources that have been put into integration work in Glasgow are being used effectively is also a concern for the Scottish Government. It was commented (Interview, Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration, May 2007) that a substantial investment<sup>10</sup> has been made, and they are now moving towards the question of what actually helps. The concern is that a project may meet its objectives, but it may not be clear that it is promoting integration. Problems arise partly from the difficulties of defining integration, which are discussed further in Chapters 5 and 8. The merging of integration funding into the Glasgow regeneration plan is intended to address some of these concerns by moving to a more strategic funding model, a shift that is discussed further in Chapter 7.

A number of other strengths and weaknesses of the work in Glasgow were identified during the interviews, and are discussed in more detail in Chapter 7. As well as the strength of grassroots work, partnership working between different stakeholders was highlighted in several interviews as a key strength. The work that has been done to integrate children into schools is also important. In terms of weaknesses, however, concerns remain over access to legal services and their quality, and child care remains a difficult issue, although not one that is confined to the asylum seeker population. Overall, however, it is felt that Glasgow has come a long way since dispersal began in 2000. As one interviewee noted, progress can be traced through the issues that have been the focus of campaign activity:

*When we started away back in 2000 ...the big issue was 'Why are you putting people in Sighthill?' 'You shouldn't be putting people in Sighthill' ... Then it moved on to a focus about integration about the time that Firsat Dag was murdered and the Scottish Executive put a lot of resources [into] integration...Then there was the big issue about Dungavel ...and that became the focus. And then it moved onto removals. So I think it's really interesting that we've gone from 7 years ago 'you shouldn't put people in Sighthill' to 'you can't take people out of these communities, they're a part of these communities'. So we're doing something right! (Education Provider)*

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<sup>10</sup> As discussed further in Section 7.1, there has been more than £12 million invested in asylum support in Glasgow since 2002.

There has therefore been a lot of work carried out in Glasgow, both high-profile and behind the scenes, which has helped to bring about a change to where there are now public campaigns to keep asylum seekers in Glasgow. Yet the situation remains fluid. The NAM, as discussed above, is an example of a changing context as a result of a change in national policy. Local developments also have an impact; whether influenced through the UK government as in the case of new asylum contract or as a result of political change in Scotland. The impact of the new accommodation contract is now considered further.

#### ***4.2.3 The New Accommodation Contract***

The original accommodation contract between Glasgow City Council and the Home Office was for the period 2000-2005; there was then an extension to the original contract prior to the agreement of the new contract which came into force in July 2006, with the new providers operational from March. This section considers some of the issues around the agreement of the new contract, the changes that it has brought about and its impact on stakeholders.

The process of agreeing the new dispersal contract was described as being ‘not necessarily straightforward’ (CRASC, 2005). The difficulties were such that there was a real possibility that an agreement might not be reached (Interview, Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration, Scottish Executive: May 2007). Funding for support services was an issue that had to be resolved, and removals were another particularly difficult issue. A number of changes have arisen as a result of the new contract. At UK government level there had been concerns over the costs of the original contracts. A review by the National Audit Office (2005a: 18) found that the existing contracts had not always represented value for money and the government was seeking to reduce costs. The post-2005 accommodation contract saw the addition of a private housing provider, the Angel Group. Glasgow City Council provides 81% of asylum seeker accommodation in the city, the YMCA 9%, and the Angel Group 10%. The change in housing providers has also resulted in demographic and geographical changes. According to the Borders and Immigration Agency (Interview, Regional Manager: July 2007) there are now more language

groups in the city, a greater slant in the numbers towards singles rather than families and accommodation is more spread out across the city. The impact of the regeneration programme in Glasgow, with the demolition of some high-rise housing stock, has led to asylum seekers being moved out of blocks being scheduled for demolition, both to different accommodation providers and to different areas of the city. The changes in school rolls illustrate the shifting geographic distribution of asylum seekers:

*we've gone from having certain schools that had asylum seekers to a stage where certainly there's only one secondary school in Glasgow which has no asylum seekers and that's ... purely because of its location. And the same with primaries, there are very few primaries now that don't have some kind of links with refugees or asylum seekers, so it's become an issue for all schools in Glasgow (Education Provider)*

The changes have necessitated some upheaval, both for asylum seekers and service providers. Moves to new parts of the city created concerns that some families might become isolated, there was also the disruption involved in children having to move schools. Uncertainty surrounding the transition process created anxiety for some prior to relocation. These concerns led to protests which occurred during the initial transition period. There was also an impact on those moved into Angel housing who will no longer have the option to retain their house if they are granted leave to remain and will have to find new accommodation quickly. The impact on asylum seekers is considered in greater depth in Chapter 6; the impact for other stakeholders is now discussed further.

One of the strengths of the work in Glasgow highlighted above is the strong role of partnership working. The change in accommodation providers, however, has meant that new partners have had to be brought on board. Working with a private accommodation provider has also meant adjustments. As mentioned during an interview at the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities Strategic Migration Partnership (COSLA SMP), within Scotland there is not a vast experience of private sector provision. Stakeholders have therefore found that the relationships are of a different nature:

*We've had to develop new relationships with people... [W]e've had a relationship with the YMCA for a long time because they've had a contract although its been a small one. The Angel Group obviously have been new and I think its been quite different for us*

*because they're obviously a commercial organisation they're not a council, they're not a charity like the YMCA and what we find is that sometimes we're not getting information because they say 'we're not contractually obliged to give you it'. We're working with the Home Office to find alternative ways of getting information directly from them. But I mean generally, we've got a system set up now that we do get the information. (Education Provider)*

It was suggested (Interview, Chief Inspector Strathclyde Police: July 2007) that, as a private sector organisation, the Angel Group have been more service focused and less interested in the wider integration aspects, although they have been co-operative when suggestions have been made. There have also been concerns relating to the removals process as the Angel Group do not have to follow the same process for evictions as that followed by a local authority. The diffusion of the asylum seeker population has generally not created the problems in the new areas that might have been anticipated. The quality of accommodation provided was also noted to be of a good standard. The new contract did create some initial problems, but the transition working group at the COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership (SMP) was able to work through many issues to try and minimise disruption. It was noted (Interview Scottish Government: May 2007) that it had worked out better than might have been predicted. The new contract is, however, a further example of stakeholders having to adapt and respond to another set of changes which have changed circumstances in a manner which they might not have chosen. Although the contract was a local level change, it was one influenced by UK government considerations. The structures which have been built up in Glasgow since dispersal began, did enable disruption to be minimised, although not prevented. Having looked at the UK and Scottish contexts, and the ways in which the policies at each level can impact on stakeholders, the final section now discusses how the two different approaches are balanced when devolved services are required to implement reserved policies.

#### **4.3 THE RESERVED/DEVOLVED BALANCE**

This chapter so far has looked at the UK and Scottish policy contexts, and given some indications of overlaps between devolved and reserved responsibilities which result when asylum seekers access devolved services. Some specific issues where

Scotland has either chosen, or indicated a wish, to take a different approach are discussed such as dawn raids, tensions over Dungavel and action over access to education. The section concludes by looking at the experiences of stakeholders dealing with the two different systems and how they find the process of balancing different approaches.

#### ***4.3.1 Divergence and Discontent***

The distinctive political context in Scotland includes an attitude towards integration for asylum seekers, which differs from that at the UK level. There have been several policy examples where these different attitudes have created a divergence and attempts (of varying success) to take a different approach in Scotland. Tensions over the Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre are noted briefly, before going on to discuss the highly contentious issue of dawn raids, and the differences in access to education for asylum seekers in Scotland.

Dungavel Immigration Removal Centre is a former prison located in South Lanarkshire, which is operated under detention centre rules on behalf of the UK Border Agency, and therefore does not come under Scottish Government jurisdiction. The presence of the centre in Scotland has raised concerns over the treatment of families detained there, and particularly the welfare of children. As Cairney (2006: 441) notes, the concerns over children in Dungavel were one of the issues that made it difficult for the Scottish Executive to maintain its initially disengaged stance. Devolved responsibility for the welfare of children also presented an avenue to push for change, and it was an issue that was taken up by Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People and by churches. At one stage proposals were put forward to allow children there to attend local schools, but it did not prove possible to reach an agreement with Westminster on this matter (BBC Scotland: 11 September 2003). In addition to the appeals against the detention of children, there was also campaigning activity to try to close Dungavel. The possibility of change prompted from Scotland is, however, limited. Cairney (2006: 441) argues that, if anything, Dungavel demonstrates the overarching influence of reserved policy on public service delivery in Scotland. Dungavel was not an issue

many stakeholders interviewed were able to comment on, given that it is outwith the control of both Glasgow City Council, and the Scottish Government. It was noted, however, during an interview at the Scottish Government (Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration: October 2007), that the Scottish Government is interested in finding an alternative to Dungavel for families and is interested in options such as a pilot scheme on the use of hostels carried out in Kent. The issue was raised during a meeting between the Scottish Education Minister and a Home Office Minister in October 2007 (BBC News Scotland: 11 October 2007).

The issue of dawn raids has also illustrated the limitations of Scottish influence over asylum policy and procedures. The practice of removing unsuccessful asylum applicants from their homes in the early hours of the morning (to try to ensure that the entire family are present), has raised concerns over the level of force used and the impact on the family and those involved with them. It causes great anxiety for other asylum-seeking families, disruption and concern for schools and neighbours, as well as difficulties for other service providers. It is often devolved service providers who have to deal with the aftermath of dawn raids, perhaps to the detriment of other aspects of their work with asylum seekers. The dilemma of different responsibilities was particularly apparent in the case of the police, who attend dawn raids for reasons of public safety and order, but do not participate in the raid itself. There is a protocol in place whereby Strathclyde Police assist in training and mentoring the BIA officers, but they do not enforce immigration legislation on their behalf. The police presence, however, can create a misperception of their role, which risks undermining the work that has been done to build trust and relations within communities. A difficult balance has to be made, and an important part of that for the police is to increase public understanding of their role. Media coverage of dawn raid protests can increase the difficulties: an example was given of a picture of police removing protesters which is used in coverage of dawn raids.

*We had a removal about a year ago ... and the police had to remove some people from the protest, and every time there's something in the press about dawn raids they produce this picture of police officers removing people from this protest and every time we have to phone whatever paper it is and say 'please remove this photograph from your website, please don't use that photograph, that is not a picture of a removal' and it's not helpful to us that that happens because we are doing such a lot of cohesion work and integration work and one fell swoop can take you two years back with actually getting asylum seekers to trust us (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*

The police have been praised (University of Glasgow, 2004) for the innovative and exemplary work they have undertaken with asylum seekers, but the influence of reserved policy is still a problem. Balances also have to be struck in other devolved services such as education, where schools have felt the effects of dawn raids and removals on their pupils. There is a need to support children (not only asylum seekers) and teachers, and materials have been developed for this purpose. But while it is important to provide support around removals, there is also a need to maintain the focus of school as a place of learning and as a haven from the problems and anxieties that there may be at home. After noting the work that had gone into helping support staff and pupils (which is discussed further in Chapter 6) the interviewee from education further noted:

*I think also one of the messages is - it's about making school a normal place to go to, it's not a place where you go and sit and talk all day about whether you're worried about whether you're going to get removed. It's a place where you come and you learn and you make friends and you do fun things, so it's about making sure that you don't get too focused on that because, yes if somebody's worried and they want to talk about it that's fine ... but, for many children, school's the place they go to get away from all those worries. (Education Provider)*

For both the police and education services, dawn raids intensified and sharpened existing issues around trust and balancing different responsibilities, and placed these in a context which was being shaped by outside forces. When working on how to support schools affected by dawn raids, education services were able to draw on good practice around issues of bereavement and loss. For the police the problems raised by dawn raids were similar to issues that are also faced over building trust in harder to access communities, while at the same time continuing to have to make arrests in those communities. The controversy over dawn raids is another indication of the limitations of Scottish influence: Scottish Ministers were unable to have a separate policy agreed for Scotland. Some progress was made, however, with agreement of the Lead Professional Model to share information more effectively for families at risk of removal, although this is still in the process of implementation, and the context has changed again with the implementation of the NAM.

Although dawn raids are an example of a reserved policy impacting in schools, education more widely has been an area where it has been possible for Scotland to take its own action on supporting asylum seekers. Two examples



demonstrate the different Scottish approach, based on integration for asylum seekers as well as refugees. These examples are: access to further education, particularly English classes (ESOL), and access to higher education for asylum seeking children who were educated in Scotland. The ESOL sector has been under a considerable amount of pressure, not only from the numbers of asylum seekers wishing to access courses, but also from the arrival of economic migrants from the new European states. The introduction of the NAM, with the hope that asylum claims will be decided far more quickly, has been a further factor in restricting free provision for asylum seekers. A number of changes were therefore announced in funding, which do not, however, affect asylum seekers in Scotland. A recent briefing paper by the Refugee Council (2007) summarised the changes. Proposals were announced in October 2006 whereby ESOL courses would no longer have an automatic fee remission, and asylum seekers aged over 19 would no longer be eligible for publicly funded further education provision. It was later announced in March 2007 that asylum seekers who are still awaiting a decision after six months, or those who have been refused, but are unable to return and are receiving Section 4 support will remain eligible for funding. In Scotland, however, although the ESOL sector is also under pressure despite substantial investment, free access to courses has been maintained. Access to education has also been widened under recent changes regarding access to higher education. Previously asylum seeking children were categorised as international students, with the high overseas student fees putting university places beyond reach. A decision has now been taken whereby asylum seeking children who have spent three years within the Scottish education system will have access to further and higher education on the same basis as Scottish children.

Cairney (2006: 430) suggests that the scope for Scottish success in influencing reserved policies depends on political will, the level of UK interest and the strength or visibility of the agenda surrounding each policy issue. In the case of asylum, it is a high-profile political issue with high UK interest. The scope of Scottish action therefore remains constrained, although as the education examples show, some devolved services have more scope for an independent stance. The reserved nature of asylum and immigration, however, dominate the policy arena. For those involved, there is a need to balance the different responsibilities, and the

experiences of those working within a devolved context implementing reserved policy are now considered in more detail.

#### **4.3.2 Striking a Balance**

The section above looked at several policy examples and the extent to which Scotland was able to develop a distinctive approach. As part of the analytic theme of the impact of policy on stakeholders, this section looks at stakeholder experiences using examples from the different levels of government, education, policing and other service providers. Frequently identified themes throughout the interviews were the difficulties and frustrations of the working context, concerns over a lack of consultation (although improvements were noted with increasing regionalisation within the Home Office), the importance of partnership working and the positive achievements that have been attained in a challenging context.

The different approaches towards supporting asylum seekers and the distinctive Scottish context have been highlighted throughout this chapter. Together with the reserved nature of the policy, but often overlapping boundaries of responsibility, these different approaches have created an interesting but challenging working environment. Frustration was expressed, but improvements that have come about over the period since dispersal started, and particularly with increased regionalisation from the Home Office were also highlighted:

*I find it frustrating, to be perfectly honest with you. I think things are changing now which I'm very pleased about...the fact that we [now] have our own regional director who's able to make some decisions for himself is fantastic because he really appreciates the difference between what's happening in Scotland and what's happening elsewhere in the country (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*

Part of the frustration reflects not only shifts in policy or procedure which then have to be dealt with on the ground, but the way in which such changes may not take account of different procedures in Scotland:

*I find that the Home Office, I don't actually think it's deliberate I think they just, kind of forget we exist, or they forget that we have different systems and they don't always*

*consider the compatibility of their policies and procedures with existing policies and procedures here ... However, I have to say in the last 9 months since Phil Taylor's<sup>11</sup> been there, it has improved tenfold, it's like suddenly we have a voice from Scotland (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*

Changes at the BIA have therefore been highlighted as a positive move, both internally and externally. It was felt that there is still scope for further regionalisation:

*If you were asking me if I had a wish list, I would wish that section 4 were regionalised, that would be the best thing to happen to Scotland. I always feel that the more control that you have in the regional office the better. (Regional Manager, BIA Scotland)<sup>12</sup>*

Regionalisation has therefore been an important factor in reducing the difficulties of working at the interface of the devolved and reserved systems. The impact of other changes, such as the new administration in Scotland is, however, still not yet fully known. Those at the Scottish Government are now in a different position to their Home Office colleagues, which may affect communications as there are now different parties in power. The SNP appears to be taking a relatively strong stance on asylum issues thus far, as demonstrated by their moves over education. It was noted (Interview, Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration: October 2007), that the actions of the Scottish Government have been very popular with refugee support organisations and ministers have received positive feedback.

In addition to regionalisation, another factor that was highlighted as being vital in dealing with the difficulties of balancing responsibilities was the role of partnership working. The COSLA SMP has played an important role in bringing different partners together, and resolving issues, for example during the time of the transition to the new accommodation contract. Some organisations (Interview ATLAS: May 2007) have also found a way forward by focusing on the areas where they feel they can be the most effective, without trying to duplicate the work of other groups. Bringing partners together enables a way forward to be found when changes may not have taken into account differences in Scotland. As one interviewee from local government (Manager, COSLA SMP) noted, it is only possible to have

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<sup>11</sup> BIA Regional Director for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

<sup>12</sup> This interview was carried out in July 2007. It was shortly after decided that Section 4 support is to be processed regionally in Glasgow (COSLA Scottish Strategic Co-ordination group, Minutes: August 2007)

influence by working together and, although they will continue to challenge the BIA, it is on the basis of being a critical friend.

Overall, although the process of working with a reserved policy in a devolved environment was found to be frustrating, the situation was felt to have improved and it had been possible to make many positive achievements in a challenging context.

## **CONCLUSION**

This chapter has set out the UK and Scottish policy frameworks, considered how they differ and how this impacts on those working with asylum policy in Scotland. The trends in asylum legislation have been towards restriction and deterrence with an increasing focus on enforcement. It is a politically charged policy area with frequently negative media coverage. Scottish policy, however, is now more supportive, favouring integration for asylum seekers as well as refugees. The extent to which Scotland is able to take a different approach is, however, restricted by political will and ability under the division of responsibilities allocated by the devolution settlement. In some areas, such as education, there have been more possibilities for distinct action, than in others, such as dawn raids, which are a direct enforcement of immigration policy. The overlapping boundaries of responsibility can create frustrations for those working within the system, who often have to deal with changing circumstances outwith their own control. The NAM and the new accommodation contract were two examples of such changes. The policy changes, and the overall frameworks which they are a part of, establish the context not only for those working in devolved services, but for the definition and promotion of integration more generally. It is these policies that shape the experiences of service providers and users, how the asylum process affects people's lives, and define the challenges that are faced as a result of dispersal in Glasgow, all issues which are addressed in the following chapters.

## **5. PROMOTING INTEGRATION: A MULTI-FACETED PROCESS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter noted the progress that has been made in integrating and supporting asylum seekers since the beginning of dispersal to Glasgow in 2000. Yet, as indicated in Chapter 2, integration remains difficult, both conceptually in how it should be defined, and practically, in how it can be attained or promoted. The aim of this chapter is to examine the experiences of those involved in the integration process, including asylum seekers trying to adapt to life in Glasgow, service providers and policy makers. The previous chapter argued that the Scottish context is different from the rest of the UK, with the distinctive approach that asylum seekers benefit from integration support even if they are only here for a short time. This chapter shifts the focus from policy to practice by discussing different integration strategies. It highlights particular challenges around promoting integration and identifies factors that promote or inhibit the process, which are considered further in later chapters. It therefore deals primarily with the analytic theme of defining and promoting integration, and the focus is on empirical material. Chapter 8 returns to the theoretical discussion of integration.

The first section considers some of the different ways, or routes, by which integration can be promoted. The ways in which service providers define integration are analysed first, looking at similarities and differences in their understandings of integration. These definitions are important as they shape the services which are provided and the integration context for asylum seekers. Two specific integration routes are then discussed: language acquisition; and user involvement and participation. English language ability is a key resource in all aspects of integration, and can act either as a stumbling block or a stepping stone in the integration process. The ways in which service users experience and are involved in service delivery is also an important aspect of integration, particularly given the strong emphasis that is placed on partnership working by service providers. The second section examines the

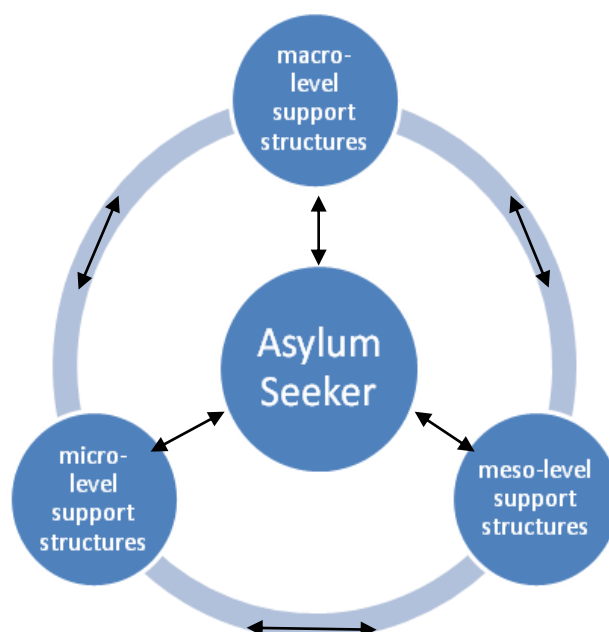
ways in which asylum seekers are able to access integration support, looking at both formal and informal networks of support including drop-ins and other groups. The final section returns to the context for integration, looking at experiences of living in Glasgow, and utilising recent research on Scottish attitudes to asylum. An important thread running throughout the chapter is the multi-faceted and individual nature of the integration process.

## **5.1 ROUTES TO INTEGRATION**

Integration is not a clear-cut concept, but is individual and subjective with many aspects contributing to the overall process. Different aspects are important to varying degrees for different people and are shaped by their individual experiences and background, and in the case of service providers, by their professional role. This section examines a number of features that form an important part of the integration process.

The different aspects that fit together within the integration process can be characterised as operating at different levels, from formal support from official organisations, to the role of informal social contacts. Figure 1 shows the dynamic interaction of different aspects of the integration process. Table 7 indicates the features of the different levels of support and provides examples of where these can be found.

**Figure 1: Interaction of Aspects of the Integration Process**



**Table 7: Forms of Support for the Integration Process**

FORMS	DISTINGUISHING FEATURES	EXAMPLES
Macro	Large formal organisations, often public sector, with specific roles and obligations in supporting asylum seekers	Glasgow City Council Scottish Refugee Council Strathclyde Police Further Education Colleges
Meso	Formally organised to extent of having particular opening times, or particular roles, but with open access and informal atmosphere	Drop-in Community Groups Refugee Community Organisations and other networks
Micro	Informal social contacts built up by individuals	Friends, family, neighbours

This chapter is broadly structured around these different types of integration support. The first section discusses how integration is understood and promoted at the macro level, considering some ways in which service providers define integration. The discussion builds on the impact of asylum policy on service providers and policy makers discussed in Chapter 4. The meso and micro levels are discussed in the following sections that consider different sources of support. Different views on meanings of integration which emerged from the interviews with service providers

are discussed first considering ways in which they vary. Two further important features of the integration process are then discussed: language acquisition and user involvement in service provision.

### **5.1.1 Service Providers' Understandings of Integration**

There are many different aspects to integration including social connections, cultural understanding, and meeting practical needs. It would be difficult for one service or project to deal with all of these. Understandings of integration are therefore shaped by the particular role that a service plays in the integration process. The importance of integration as a two-way concept was frequently stressed, alongside the need for mutual respect. The difficulties of imposing concepts of integration and of measuring integration were also noted, as were the difficulties of how to integrate those with a temporary status. The shifts in asylum policy and practice, as discussed in Chapter 4, have also had an impact by changing asylum seekers' entitlements, and therefore the types of integration work that can be undertaken.

Integration as a two-way process, which starts from the day of arrival in Scotland, was emphasised in several interviews, reflecting what has become a strong and distinct policy stance in Scotland. The acceptance of difference on both sides was seen as an important feature:

*To have an integrated community, you have to have a community that can live together, respect one another and be different, maintain individuality be it cultural, ethnic, religious backgrounds, whatever it is ... its about that acceptance, its not about tolerance ... I hate the use of that word because tolerance to me means 'we'll put up with you' (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*

The aim of creating this mutual respect and acceptance, and the need to see integration as a two-way process, arises in part from the initial difficulties encountered when dispersal began. As one interviewee noted (Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration Team, Scottish Government), integration has to be about bringing communities together. It was suggested that tensions arose during the initial dispersal period over support for asylum seekers as local people had felt hurt and let down. Such tensions would therefore, have been exacerbated by the funding



of activities that were only for asylum seekers, rather than activities that bring people together. There was therefore, some agreement between service providers, around the broader ideals of integration, but difficulties remained over how it could most effectively be promoted or measured, an issue that is discussed further in Chapter 8. One interviewee raised concerns over notions, or indicators of integration that focused on community participation:

*I find this a really difficult one because when people talk about integration, and indicators of integration I always look at them and think, if that was applied to me, I wouldn't be integrated. And the reason, you know its all this stuff about membership of local community groups ... I'm very wary of this whole thing about being a member of lots of things, as being an indicator of integration. I mean to me integration [is] more about making sure that your children take part in opportunities and that you do (Education Provider)*

This comment indicates the difficulties of finding appropriate indicators to represent integration. In addition to the difficulties of quantifying the integration process, different aspects are more meaningful for different people. Group membership may be a useful and quantifiable indicator, but it is not appropriate for all individuals. Previous work on indicators of integration for refugees (Ager and Strang, 2004b) has emphasised the complexity of the integration process, using both public outcomes such as education and housing, and social relationships in the framework of indicators. Indicators of integration are discussed further in Chapter 8, but as many of the conventional indicators of integration, such as housing and employment, are not applicable to asylum seekers, other aspects such as social connections become more prominent in measuring integration. There is therefore a need for flexibility when considering routes to integration for asylum seekers, as these mainstream routes such as employment are often unavailable, presenting considerable challenges. The difficulty of promoting integration for those with temporary status is an ongoing concern for service providers. As indicated above, the overall attitude of the Scottish Government (Interview, Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration team) is that integration, even if it is only short-term, benefits both asylum seekers and local communities. One interviewee felt that increasing public understanding of the asylum system may be helpful:

*Its very difficult to integrate somebody who doesn't know if they're going to be here long-term or not ... But if immigration legislation and procedures can be a bit clearer*

*...and the Home Office can start to be a bit more public about their processes which they are being... we now have a media officer working over at BIA which is a fantastic step forward because if we can start getting messages from BIA out to the communities then that's all going to help to make it easier for short-term integration. (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*

In addition to the difficulties of defining integration, particularly within a temporary context, integration as a multifaceted concept also raises difficult questions of how (often limited) resources can best be used. The shifting policy arena adds a further complication as changes in asylum regulations shape the possibilities for integration work. The remit, and thus understanding of integration, of one agency interviewed (ATLAS Partnership) originally focused on employability issues, as it was initially funded during the period when asylum seekers were still able to get permission to work. The removal of work rights resulted in a shift of focus towards volunteering. While employability support is valuable to refugees and helps to address the loss of skills that can occur while asylum seekers are waiting for a decision, another interviewee was critical of such work:

*A classic example would be the myriad of projects that ostensibly support asylum seekers to get jobs. Now there's a fundamental conflict about that whilst there's a policy position for the Home Office, asylum seekers are not to be allowed to work ... The energy for me, for asylum seekers should be far more on things like legal services, social support, therapeutic support, orienteering, volunteering opportunities and college. (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

As the comment indicates, there are diverging views on how resources should be used in supporting asylum seekers. There are differences in the positions of those who have a more strategic role, and those whose work focuses on more specific areas. The move towards a more strategic funding model for integration is discussed further in Chapter 7. The views of service providers provide an insight into the complexities of promoting integration and the numerous ways in which it can be supported. In terms of the use of resources, there is also a balance between supporting special projects and everyday activities, both of which have an important role to play. One interviewee used a special project not only as an example of integration work, but of organisational progress in promoting integration. Operation Reclaim is a youth work project run by Strathclyde Police, which aims to use sport to bring young people together:

*That came really from nowhere and has moved on to the extent that this year there is a budget in excess of half a million pounds for Reclaim. It's running in five different areas and each time it runs it reduces racist crime by roughly 50% in the area that it's running at the time its running. It reduces gang fighting by 100% in the area that it's running at the time its running which is fantastic, which obviously again has an impact on the reduction of the fear of crime. But it is very much about getting asylum seekers and white indigenous population on the football pitch together ... whatever sporting event it is ...and getting them to realise this is the same type of person as me, it's just a different colour of skin. (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*

For the interviewee, Operation Reclaim was important not only for the success that it had achieved, but because a small suggestion put forward as a way of tackling some integration issues was able to develop to such an extent and reach so many people. However, alongside the work of successful integration projects, which have had a real impact, it is important not to overlook the everyday activities that also go towards supporting integration:

*I think a lot of integration is done through the ordinary bread and butter activities that go on in schools, in health centres, and all over the place, in libraries, all these sorts of thing and I think that very often can be ignored ... that's where the real integration takes place... its about doing ordinary things well, in a way everybody can take part in, and that's really what integration is about (Education Provider)*

Views on integration covered a spectrum of issues, highlighting integration as a two-way process, the importance of mutual respect and issues of how resources can best be used to promote integration. There was a different emphasis (or value) put on different aspects such as the validity of employment support, or the balance between special projects and everyday activities. Two more specific ways of promoting integration are now considered: firstly the role of language acquisition and secondly the role of service user involvement.

### **5.1.2 Language Acquisition**

Language ability is a key factor in promoting integration for asylum seekers by facilitating access to services, and the building of social relationships. In terms of the levels of support indicated in Table 7, it can come through large formal organisations such as colleges but also at a more meso level through community groups. In addition to its practical value, it also increases confidence and self-esteem,

facilitating other aspects of integration. It is an area in which the Scottish Government has made a strong commitment, and also relates to the issue of translation and interpreting which is one of the crosscutting issues in the 2003 Scottish Refugee Integration Forum action plan (2003a). The importance of speaking English emerged as a frequent theme throughout the research from asylum seekers themselves, service providers and policy makers. This section considers some of the issues around the provision of English language (ESOL) teaching for asylum seekers highlighting some of its advantages and limitations. These include practical issues, such as attendance and childcare, and the issue of balancing a wide variety of needs. This section also looks at some of the additional benefits that English classes can provide beyond language skills, by providing support and an opportunity for people to work together.

English classes are delivered in a variety of forms through both local informal community classes and further education courses. Demand is very high for college places, with waiting lists in operation. One Glasgow-based provider interviewed noted that there were currently (Interview: June 2007) around 600 people on the waiting list, including asylum seekers and refugees, other migrants and overseas students. Community classes offer a more accessible option, but may be limited in the number of hours of instruction provided. A number of issues, however, are common across community and college groups including attendance problems, childcare, dealing with a wide range of learning needs and the limitations of the courses. A strong desire to both learn and improve English was frequently expressed by asylum seekers during the participant observation, both within the context of the English classes offered at one drop-in and in general conversation. Limitations on the ability to communicate were frustrating and often increased feelings of isolation for asylum seekers. Attending classes, however, was not always straightforward. A major barrier, particularly for women, was the issue of childcare. The drop-in English classes had a crèche facility, but places were limited and assigned on a first-come, first-served basis. Within the college sector, a childcare place may have to be found at a different college, which could raise difficult issues of transport and being able to both place the child in the crèche and get to classes on time. The issue of childcare is not only a problem for the asylum-seeker population, and decisions

therefore have to be made regarding a fair allocation of resources. An ESOL provider commented:

*What we have to remember... is it's a nightmare for everyone in Glasgow and you can't say its worse for asylum seekers and refugees ... I mean single parents have exactly the same problem, we have a fabulous nursery but ... when it's full its full that's it ... We have childcare funds, and they were mostly being used up by asylum seekers and refugees, but there are other students that need to have access to these funds. We decided, we took very hard decisions that students can only have I think it's one or two years of childcare now and then they sink or swim and it has to go to somebody else ... and it's what's fair, when you're stuck you have to allocate resources (ESOL Provider)*

Difficult balances have to be made throughout the whole process of providing English teaching. Although there is some division by ability level, which is done to a greater extent within college classes, any group will contain people with a wide range of abilities and previous educational experience. Both group and individual proficiency levels vary across the core skills of reading, writing and speaking. There is also a considerable range of educational experience, from those who are university educated to those who may not be literate in their native languages. Meeting all these different needs within a community class, or within a large college class teaching general English is extremely difficult as some need more specialised or intensive support than is available. The development of vocational language courses has helped to meet the needs of advanced learners, but issues remain around helping those at lower levels of attainment to progress. Classes alone are unlikely to provide enough time, and it can be difficult for people to find opportunities to practice. The anxieties associated with the asylum process also act as a stumbling block:

*Well, I honestly think that as long as the decision on their case is hanging over them they're not going to progress... I think there's a high motivational thing in the beginning, but as you see people [waiting for] this enormous period of time, it's very very hard to keep motivated, even to keep coming to classes after a bit. Its just despair and that has a terrible impact on their learning. And sometimes I think people just come along because it's a bit of a safety net, and it gives them a pattern to their day that they otherwise wouldn't have (ESOL provider)*

A number of important issues are illustrated in the extract above, which emphasise the ways in which the temporary status of asylum seekers complicates integration efforts. The difficulties of the asylum process can present a barrier to attendance and progress through both the inherent emotional strain of waiting for a decision, and practical difficulties, such as having to attend meetings with solicitors or the Home

Office. The problem of delays in the asylum application process is being tackled through the NAM, as discussed in Chapter 4, although the problems of linking people with classes will remain. The role that classes can play beyond language acquisition was also alluded to with the reference to classes functioning as a ‘safety net’. The supplementary benefits from English classes that can support integration are now considered further.

The additional benefits that can arise from English classes, at both college and community level, which can support integration include the social aspects of attendance and the advice and support that asylum seekers can receive. Those in the community class in which participant observation took place frequently spoke of the importance of the class to them. It represented an important source of social contact and many valued the friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Other services in the local area were able to refer people to the classes. In one example, a health visitor brought along a woman who had been very isolated at home with small children: at the class she was able both to improve her English, and to meet others who spoke a common language. The teacher, however, expressed concern that there was a risk of the class being more of a social group than a group focused around learning (field notes, November 2006). The group was also able to promote contact with other services, such as health visitors, who could visit to publicise their services. English teachers themselves were a valuable source of information and support, for example, by providing explanations of official letters that students received.

One means of promoting integration that both addresses some of the difficulties around learning progress, and enhances some of the other benefits from English classes is through volunteering. It was highlighted by one provider as a crucial way of breaking out of the restrictions and limitations of the English classes:

*The English language class is very artificial, its a lovely safe happy environment ... people will know the exact bus fare so they don't have to engage with the bus driver, they'll go to supermarkets where they hardly have to speak, and so on and so forth and I honestly believe the only way [to progress] is the shock where you put somebody into a setting where they're with native speakers, and they've got to get on with it. We could always give them the safety net of coming back... asylum seekers who did go off, they were usually pretty highly educated and highly motivated but the difference in their English language when they came back was exponential, just amazing. (ESOL provider)*

Volunteering (discussed further below) therefore offers the possibility of combining and strengthening routes to integration for those for whom it is appropriate. Several asylum seekers met through participant observation were involved in volunteering, both at the research sites and elsewhere, and found it a valuable experience that both improved their language skills and provided them with meaningful activity.

ESOL teaching is a key route to integration for a number of reasons, both through language ability itself and promoting social connections. But there are a number of barriers through limitations of service provision, and that reflect the circumstances of individuals. Another specific way of promoting integration is now considered, namely the ways in which users can be involved in the services they receive.

### ***5.1.3 Service User Involvement and Participation***

The final aspect of routes to integration that is considered in this section is the involvement and participation of users in the services that are intended to promote asylum seeker integration. This is of importance for two reasons. Partnership working is frequently referred to as a key factor behind the success of moving integration forward in Glasgow since dispersal began. It is therefore important to consider how far and in what ways asylum seekers themselves have been involved in such partnerships. It is also important in terms of understanding integration as a two-way process and the ways in which asylum seekers have been able to contribute to that process. Some of the different ways in which participation has been undertaken, both formally and informally are discussed. These include the examples of the two drop-ins used for fieldwork and more formal consultation and forums designed to give asylum seekers a voice in decision making.

Drop-in community groups, often run through churches, have played an important role in supporting asylum seekers in Glasgow. There are a considerable number of such groups offering humanitarian support, friendship, language classes, parents' groups and other activities. Participant observation was carried out in two such groups, which offered activities including a craft group, a second-hand shop and English classes as well as day trips and other special events. The different ways in

which each group interacted with asylum seekers are discussed. Asylum seekers were involved in various ways in the services provided, both on an ongoing basis and as part of one-off exercises. One group included asylum seekers and refugees as volunteers while the other did not. One group did an annual mini-survey with users to find out their views on the services provided, and both used local information days as a way of finding out if there were any additional services that people might find useful and to get comments on their existing provision.

Involving asylum seekers as volunteers is a direct way of involving service users and allowing them to help shape the service, it also helps integration in other ways by providing language practice and work experience. Yet for both groups it was not a straightforward issue. One interviewee highlighted the benefits, while also indicating the complexities:

*I think its really good having the asylum seekers involved, because then its not just we're doing something for them ... but they're actually able to participate in that themselves, so I think its very worthwhile having them involved, but there are problems... (Community Group Co-ordinator, Sighthill)*

The benefits were not just the involvement in the work itself, but the wider integration issues:

*I would say that they benefit from obviously being able to volunteer when they're not allowed to work, from the friendship, from just being involved with us, and we benefit from having them, because it gives us an insight into what their lives are actually like, their culture as well, so I think it's very important from both points of view. (Community Group Co-ordinator, Sighthill)*

The issue of fairness, however, was an important concern. It was important not to create an impression that people were being treated differently and for one group this had limited the involvement of asylum seekers. When asked if they had considered using asylum seekers as volunteers these difficulties were brought out:

*I think we should, I mean we try on the Wednesday to include people. I think we should probably talk about that... we encourage people to do volunteer work with other agencies, but we probably could be making more use...But I think it's difficult even with a volunteers meeting to have people who use the drop in – again who do you choose without 'why has she been invited along and we're not' so I think maybe we try to talk to everybody, but you do have to be quite careful (Community Group Co-ordinator, Balornock)*



In this case, rather than risk creating tension by appearing to single out particular people, the approach instead was to try and be generally open and consultative. As indicated above, local information days with stands from different agencies also provided opportunities for discussion. These days also provided an opportunity to speak to people who did not normally use these services and find out why; college courses and a lack of awareness of the crèche facilities were common reasons. The annual evaluation exercise carried out by one group asked people what difference the project had made to their lives, and what they would do if it wasn't there. The responses are considered when the drop-ins are discussed further in Section 5.2. Although the evaluation exercise provided an opportunity for people to express their views, language barriers limit the range and depth of responses that can be gathered from such exercises.

Outwith the drop-ins, there are a number of models for the involvement of asylum seekers in integration and service provision. These can range from including asylum seeker representatives at meetings or on steering committees, to aiming more for personal development and empowerment. One interviewee (ATLAS, May 2007) from an agency that had funded a number of projects, found that there could be problems of both cultural relevance and the disruptive nature of the asylum process when engaging users in projects and trying to gauge outcomes. There was a tendency for people to over-report in a positive manner which undermined the usefulness of certain forms of evaluation. Other work has been more directly aimed at giving asylum seekers and refugees a voice in policy development and not just particular local services. These include projects such as the Framework for Dialogue (FFD) groups in local areas around the city, and the Refugee Policy Forum (RPF), which brings together members from different asylum seeker and refugee community groups and networks. Meetings of both of these groups were observed during the research. The FFD was described by one participant as 'offering participants a place to think and reflect, and to think how to improve lives in Glasgow – somewhat' (field notes, March 2006). These groups offer a place for service providers to meet with asylum seekers and exchange information and views. The service did not develop as originally anticipated (Scottish Refugee Council, 2005: 8) with the focus more on issues of asylum rather than cohesion. One asylum seeker interviewed (A, Iraqi

asylum seeker, July 2007) felt that many people may have originally become involved as they thought it would help their asylum case and became disillusioned on realising that this was not the case. Nonetheless, the groups promote links and are involved in integration activity through involvement in broader forums. The RPF provides a way of bringing asylum seekers' concerns directly to a senior level, for example through a submission to the UK Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights investigation into the treatment of asylum seekers. Members of the groups also spoke at the public hearing in Glasgow held by the Independent Asylum Commission as part of its nationwide review of the asylum system.

There are therefore a number of different ways in which asylum seekers are involved in the services which aim to support their integration. Involvement aids integration in a number of ways, by improving service providers' understanding of asylum seekers' views and the role of their services, and enhancing the partnership aspects of integration work. The asylum seeker community is, however, extremely heterogeneous, which does raise issues of representation around consultation. At a smaller scale, there can also be the risk of creating perceptions of favouring certain groups. User involvement is therefore both complex and worthwhile for the benefits it brings in promoting integration.

This section has considered some of the routes to integration by looking at some different aspects of the integration process; how integration is understood by service providers, the role of language acquisition, and consultation of asylum seekers. Each of these different aspects contributes to the integration process, in a different way and to a different extent for different individuals. This chapter now discusses some further sources of support that can help with integration, building on some of the issues identified above, and taking more meso and micro perspectives.

## **5.2 SOURCES OF SUPPORT**

Promoting integration is not only about the provision of services, but also about access to these services and other forms of support. This section will consider two forms of support that are available to asylum seekers in the integration process,

which could be considered as meso forms of support, the work of the drop-in groups indicated above, and other formal and informal networks of support. Church groups were among the first to respond to the needs of asylum seekers and communities following the start of dispersal and are key members in the different integration networks. They offer an informal and accessible means of support and can facilitate the building of other connections. In some cases these other connections (though not solely formed within drop-ins) have become formalised into refugee community organisations (RCOs), which offer support from those with similar experiences and backgrounds. The final section discusses more micro aspects such as personal characteristics, experiences, and attitudes.

### ***5.2.1 Drop-in Groups and Integration***

The pivotal role of church drop-ins in supporting integration has been noted above. Churches were among the first to respond to the needs of asylum seekers upon their arrival in the city and they have continued to play a prominent role in the integration process. Wren (2004: 28) found that the drop-ins have played a key role in local integration networks and noted their valuable role in orientating new arrivals, providing safe meeting places and connecting asylum seekers with host communities. Drop-ins facilitate social interaction, and it has also been suggested (Wren, 2004: 28) that using the drop-ins as a platform to access other services has worked particularly well in Glasgow. Based on participant observation and interviews carried out in two drop-ins in an area of Glasgow with a large share of the asylum seeker population, this section further considers the role of the drop-ins in promoting integration. It looks at the services that are provided, the links that are facilitated, the views of users, and the strengths and limitations of drop-in work. Issues of importance to later chapters, such as changing needs, are highlighted.

The drop-in groups provide a variety of sources of support that help to promote integration for asylum seekers. They provide a place for people to meet and regular events for people during the week. Other service providers are able to visit to increase awareness of their services, and help can also be provided in contacting other agencies. Second-hand goods are also available at low prices to help both

asylum seekers and other local residents manage on low incomes. There are weekly English classes and one drop-in group runs a computing class. In both places, there are core groups of users who attend on a regular basis, for whom the groups are a key source of support, and also those who may attend on a more occasional or one-off basis. Work often tended to be focused around supporting asylum seekers rather than cross-cultural contact. Although all activities were open to whoever wished to attend, in practice those who came along were almost entirely asylum seekers and refugees. It is clear, however, that, particularly for the core group of users but also for other less frequent users, these services offered vital support and help, both practical and social. The drop-ins were a place to share concerns and get support, to meet others, and to get access to household items that may otherwise have been difficult to obtain. Many users spoke of the gap they felt when the services were closed over school holiday periods. For many users the drop-in groups appeared to be one of the only places they attended other than colleges or shops. Support provided included helping to resolve problems with other agencies, the opportunity to be able to sit down and talk over a cup of tea, access to social activities through parents' groups, and language support through English classes. The drop-in groups also acted as information providers through leaflets and posters, and other agencies visited the drop-ins to promote their work. Health visitors would hold informal clinics on a regular basis. Drop-in groups therefore provided a number of means through which integration was promoted. These included social support, links to other organisations and, through English classes and volunteering, help in providing skills and boosting confidence that people could take forward in other integration opportunities. Other drop-ins may choose to focus more on social connections rather than links to service providers.

The evaluation exercise carried out by one group offered a useful opportunity to hear volunteers and users' views on the services provided. For all volunteers, the drop-in groups were a useful opportunity to meet people and get involved in the community. Those volunteers who were asylum seekers or refugees also noted the role of the service in providing meaningful activity, and a way of getting out of the house. Amongst the users who commented, common themes were the financial benefits of being able to access goods at very low prices, the opportunity to meet

people, having somewhere to go and a place of support. The situation had settled and moved on from the early days of dispersal as most of the people who came had been in Glasgow for several years. The changes in support needs are discussed further in Chapter 6, but there had been a shift in emphasis from practical support to emotional support. As indicated in Chapter 4, however, as the NAM will mean asylum seekers moving on more quickly, further readjustments will have to be made. One response was to consider changes that might have to be made in outreach work, to inform asylum seekers who live outwith the original dispersal areas of the services about the help that is available through the drop-in groups. At the time the research was carried out, the number of asylum seekers in the local area was already falling due to the ongoing demolition/regeneration programme in Glasgow. As one service provider commented, there is a constant need to take into consideration how the changing context affects the work that is being carried out:

*I suppose it's always just looking to say well, what are you doing here? Why are you doing it? Is it still – is a vision still there, is it still worthwhile being here for people? Obviously it is if you've got people coming, but you know it's just constant reassessment of what you're doing, and I think in any situation that's wise, because you don't just keep on doing something because its always been done or it's been done for 6 years. (Community Group Co-ordinator, Sighthill)*

In addition to the need to adjust services as a result of changes in asylum policy, and in the asylum-seeker population, the strengths and limitations of the drop-ins as a source of support must also be considered. The strengths arise from the accessible nature of the support offered, and the relationships which can be built up. There are, however, limitations: facilities can be limited in terms of being able to offer opportunities for cross-community engagement. The reliance on volunteers also means closures in service provision during the school holiday period, which, particularly over the summer break, leaves a long gap. Wren (2004:28) noted that there were concerns among the local integration networks that the drop-ins were not reaching enough asylum seekers. The question of scale is an important one when considering ways in which integration is promoted, projects often work on a very local level, and may be an invaluable resource for those that they reach, but it is difficult to gauge their wider impact. Connecting projects together and building on the support they provide is a difficult issue, which is discussed in more depth when a

strategic approach to integration is analysed in Chapter 7. Drop-ins do play an important role, however, in facilitating social connections, and these informal sources of support are discussed further below.

### **5.2.2 Formal and Informal Networks**

In addition to the drop-ins discussed above, there are other sources of support for integration, which also fit more into the meso and micro levels of support identified in Table 7. These other sources include various support and friendship groups, and also the instances where these have become crystallised into more formal networks through the founding of refugee community associations (RCOs). Informal friendship groups are discussed first, looking at the bases for support and connection. More formalised networks are then considered, RCOs are an important area, although one which can only be touched on briefly within the context of this research. The role that RCOs can play in the integration process, and their strengths and weaknesses is, however, considered prior to a discussion of the overall role of such formal and informal networks in supporting integration.

One function of drop-ins in promoting integration, as noted above, is the provision of a safe space for building social contacts and friendships. Drop-ins and community groups are not the only contexts for such processes, which can also occur in many other settings, but it was a feature which was observed during the fieldwork. Several strong networks of support and friendship could be observed at the drop-ins. There were several bases for such connections: language, children, religion, and the shared experience of dealing with the asylum process. Shared languages created strong groups, sometimes across different nationalities. Having children in the same class at school was also a source of friendship, even where common language was limited. Such friendship groups can not only provide comfort and support, but also help in the provision of information. One drop-in coordinator commented:

*I think if people come and they don't know [anyone], sometimes the best thing you can do is introduce them to others. Not assume they're naturally going to be friends just because they come from the same country, but sometimes it just gives them a wee inroad into some contacts (Community Group Co-ordinator, Balornock)*

There is a risk of assuming commonality, as the asylum seeker population in Glasgow is very diverse and individuals may not necessarily feel comfortable, or choose to spend time with those from their country of origin. One woman (S, Iranian asylum seeker) commented (fieldnotes, November 2006) that she did not want to spend time with the other Iranians in Glasgow, as these were not people she would have associated with in Iran. For others, however, there was comfort in spending time with other asylum seekers, whether from the same country or not. This support can also be helpful in aiding the integration process. In some cases friendship or support groups have become more formalised into networks and associations, often based around national origin, although some, such as the African women's group Karibu, have a cross-national membership. The number of such groups is difficult to know, although the Scottish Refugee Council noted (2005: 13) that they had been in touch with 25 such groups in the preceding year. There can be high turnover in leadership and participation due to the demands and outcomes of the asylum process. In some instances these groups have begun to take a more active role in trying to influence policy and promote integration. Representatives from different refugee groups meet in the Scottish Refugee Policy Forum, where they can discuss issues of concern and present their views to policy makers in a more concerted manner. One strand of integration work thus comes from awareness raising and campaigning. Such groups also work to facilitate integration in other ways, by raising the confidence and self esteem of those involved, providing a means of maintaining and improving skills whilst being unable to work, and providing a platform for other activities. These various benefits were highlighted by one interviewee who was a founding member of a now well-established RCO:

*We survived war, discrimination, torture, when you go through such awful thing[s] you find yourself helpless but this is, Karibu we can use this to give back the hope, the confidence, self esteem, everything that we lost in the past. And of course we have friends of Karibu who are really helping us in this process to get back on our feet and to integrate. Because if you don't feel good yourself how can you integrate, how can you make friends, how can you go to work, how can you... (H, Congolese refugee)*

In addition to the social and emotional benefits, such groups can also offer more practical help to try and counteract some of the difficulties of the asylum process:

*You lose your skills, we are lucky because we have our Karibu, I can use the computer, I can use the email, I can read [documents], so its keeps me a bit up doing this voluntary work. Imagine if I did stay 6 years doing nothing, today I would not even be able to even write a letter... this is why Karibu are having our drop-in, women can come, we talk, we can call service providers to come to talk to women. This makes the process of integration a bit easier because if you want to take it alone it is very difficult. We need this support network for our integration (H, Congolese refugee)*

In the case of the group mentioned above, it has provided an opportunity and a place for the women involved to either maintain or improve their skills, particularly for those who deal with the financial and organisational aspects of running such a group. These associations therefore have a valuable role in countering isolation and promoting social connections and links with service providers and policy makers. There are also difficulties in running the groups that can bring added pressures to people already in difficult circumstances. One problem can be the time-consuming nature of trying to set up and run new organisations, which can intrude into personal life and space. In addition to the intrusion of group work into home life, there can also be the intrusion of politics from the country of origin into the work of refugee community groups. One interviewee (A, Iraqi asylum seeker) commented that he had been given a grant from the Home Office to help promote the integration work of his group, but due to the conflict between different groups in Iraq there had not been a management committee meeting in eight months. Although the group's purpose is integration, and it is intended to remain separate from any religious or political issues, people were no longer working together, despite initial enthusiasm. Refugee community groups therefore face a number of challenges around setting up groups in a new country and overcoming the hurdles created by the asylum system. Their role, however, is vital, as one organiser commented:

*We want to use Karibu as a template, as a springboard, it is easier for us as we come from almost the same background. We understand each other better and so people will, even people who are less confident, they will feel more confident within Karibu than elsewhere. Yeah, so it's about building confidence, self esteem, learning skills, new skills or improving skills we already have, this is what we want to use Karibu for. (H, Congolese refugee)*

Refugee groups therefore face a number of challenges, but are an important source of support for asylum seekers and refugees, providing a supportive environment of people with shared experiences, who can come together to address practical



problems that they might be facing. How far such groups promote integration depends in part on how integration is understood, and they might be stronger on some aspects than others. The more established groups can effectively help to link people with service providers and raise concerns, thus addressing one important aspect of integration. The focus may be more on mutual support than on promoting interaction with Scottish people or groups. In part this may be a question of capacity as RCOs in Glasgow are still in the early stages of development. The support role is also important in acting as a foundation for future integration opportunities. The different sources of support discussed above also have to be understood within the context of Glasgow itself, which provides the framework for integration work and experiences.

### **5.3 VIEWS OF LIFE IN GLASGOW**

The final aspect of promoting integration discussed in this chapter deals with Glasgow as the context for integration, and continues to look at more micro level factors such as individuals' views and experiences. Asylum seekers' views and impressions of Glasgow, as expressed in both interviews and throughout the participant observation are discussed first, bearing in mind changes over the period since dispersal began. The difficulties of adjusting to different circumstances are then discussed, taking into account the role of personal characteristics. Finally, the views of asylum seekers are related to views of the Scottish population, drawing not only on the participant observation fieldwork, but also on recent research on public attitudes to asylum seekers in Scotland (Lewis, 2006). Housing has been a factor which has been important in all of these different aspects. The conclusion considers how all these various aspects of the integration process work together, highlighting challenges for further discussion.

### 5.3.1 Context and Impressions

Integration is not only about policy, but is a subjective experience, both relative and contextual. One interviewee (Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration, Scottish Government) emphasised that part of integration is the landscape of Glasgow itself. Particular local circumstances can have a strong impact on integration experiences, for example the murder of Firsat Dag in Sighthill, as discussed in Chapter 4, or the experience of living in high-rise flats. Asylum seekers' first impressions of Glasgow are considered first, then how these views may have changed and the factors influencing such changes. As the dispersal context is again changing through the impact of the new accommodation contract, the implications of these changes are then analysed.

The problems of initial stages of dispersal were discussed earlier in Chapter 4. The speed of arrivals and lack of local control over the process overwhelmed the initial preparations. The provision of financial support through vouchers also contributed to negative perceptions of asylum seekers by highlighting their dependent situation. It was noted earlier that a considerable amount of work has been done to rectify the initial problems, with many positive achievements over the seven years since dispersal began. First impressions are therefore affected by the period during which an individual arrived in Glasgow. There were, however, some common themes among the range of initial impressions including the housing, the lack of local facilities, the weather and the isolation of the initial arrival. Some found Scottish people to be friendly, others less so, particularly due to the barriers of language and accent. Housing was an important factor as illustrated by one interviewee:

*It was really shocking, it was a very bad impression ... But luckily I wasn't expecting [much] because I know I am an asylum seeker and maybe this is only what they could give me. But the most worrying thing was the safety, yeah, the beginning was quite difficult especially with children, you know it's them going out and I think a couple of times we have to call the police because my youngest was wounded for nothing, they just throw a stone and the blood coming out... and after when, I think after two years, things started settling down (H, Congolese refugee)*

For another interviewee, although the area seemed bleak, the housing was an improvement over her previous accommodation on arrival in the UK:

*The first time, I don't like it because I don't see nothing, just the high buildings and just [the supermarkets]. I was very happy with this flat because the flat was, it don't have any mouse, and me, I was happy. My husband was angry because he don't see nobody. Yeah, and after like two months and everything is okay (N, Algerian asylum seeker)*

Another interviewee, despite the initial impression of difference on arrival had positive first impressions:

*The first time it was very ... I thought very different from my country, its very cold, yeah and after it was okay, I saw the people as very friendly and very helpful [to] another people when they come to the UK. I was happy [to be in] Glasgow (S, Iraqi Refugee)*

Many of the asylum seekers now in Glasgow have been there for a number of years and have therefore had more time to get to know the city and develop their views and experiences. Many involved in the research were now quite positive about living in Glasgow, although it is important to recognise that there may have been a reluctance to express negative views. The sense of safety and security that people had found after the problems they had experienced in their home countries is important, despite any concerns there may have been in Glasgow. One commented (B, Turkish asylum seeker, field notes, March 2007) on the sense of relief and of returning home that she had felt on returning to her flat after a week spent away in London. Others noted that they liked Glasgow, and a number had chosen to stay on gaining leave to remain, as they had built up connections, or because their children had settled well into the schools.

For one interviewee who has now been granted leave to remain the decision to stay in Glasgow reflected her understanding of integration:

*I think if you ask me to go and live in London, I won't accept that, I will say 'oh I can't'. So I feel normal living here. So going to London, no, no. I am integrated because my, even my soul, my mind, my body, everything of me accept here. Its here I know people, here I know where to go if I need this, I can understand the people and I know Scottish people a bit, I can say I know a bit about them and to go to England, to London, I would feel strange. (H, Congolese refugee)*

Although choosing to stay in Glasgow may be one indication of feeling integrated, another interviewee (A, Iraqi asylum seeker) argued that choosing to leave the city is not necessarily a reflection of any negativity towards the city, but is an outcome of now being able to exercise a choice in location, which is denied to asylum seekers

under the dispersal program. A number of factors were mentioned as having brought about a change from initial difficulties to feeling more positive and settled. These factors included meeting people, accessing services and education as well as personal will and effort. One asylum seeker commented on the difference after a couple of months:

*[We started to] meet people, my husband start college and I know about the church and I was coming for the English class. (N, Algerian asylum seeker)*

For another, the biggest source of change came not from any particular service or source of help, but from within:

*I think first of all, it was myself, because it is all about yourself, I am the type of person, I don't say I make friends easily no, but I love people. I love people, I love being with people, if you have a positive idea how are people, they also will have the same to you, so I can say 80% of [the local area], they know also because of my two sons, we have been living here for six years, and about my activity. Also especially, in 2005 there was a film shown on BBC1 Scotland about asylum and I was in the film, I talked and this touched everybody, so everywhere I went even the post office, even the hospital, people recognise me (H, Congolese refugee)*

Although many of the asylum seekers who were involved in the research expressed positive attitudes towards Glasgow, and had achieved positive changes since their first arrival, problems still remain. The new accommodation contract, by moving people to different areas, had changed the context and in some cases uprooted people from local support structures. Racism and harassment continued to be problems and both the enforced limbo of the asylum system, and often existing cultural differences, could contribute to a sense of isolation and dislocation. The problems of adjusting to different circumstances and how these can impact with the integration process are now discussed further.

### **5.3.2 Adjusting to Different Circumstances**

A number of features of living in Glasgow (or in the UK more generally) emerged during the research that highlighted for people the different context that they are now living in, and which can have an important impact upon the integration process. These included a more individualistic society, the potential loss of status, and how

previous life experiences, including existing knowledge of language and culture, contribute to the experience of living and trying to integrate into Glasgow.

The differences in interaction with neighbours were mentioned by several as an important difference, with contact often being minimal, which for many was unusual. One service provider commented:

*I think in this area it's difficult because a lot of the Scottish people have their own problems, and there's people [who] maybe are very friendly, but just maybe drink a bit much and then folk are a bit afraid. They maybe hear shouting coming from the house and they're a bit afraid to get too involved, but there are some very good friendships there. (Community Group Co-ordinator, Balornock)*

Relations were therefore, not necessarily negative, but could often be distant. Several people were surprised at this lack of interaction. Language and confidence could also be barriers in developing relationships. Previous life experience therefore played an important role in adjusting to different circumstances and beginning the process of integration. One interviewee commented on how her previous experiences had not only helped her, but prompted her to try to do something to help others by setting up a women's group:

*As the beginning was difficult, I am the type of person, I always think of others... I say if me with a bit of English, and me this is not the first time I came to Europe, I did my university in [Europe], when I was working I used to travel a lot ... so this was not a problem. This is strange, but it was strange because I have to live here, it is not my country, it is not my place. But what about those who for the first time they arrive here, and if they don't have English? I was really thinking about these women with no English, it was very difficult... there are so many services here, so many resources, but the women they cannot access because of language barrier, because of lack of knowledge, because the system is all new for them – so there is a gap, how can we fill this gap between the women and the services. (H, Congolese refugee)*

Racism also remains a concern for both service providers and asylum seekers. One asylum seeker (A, Iraqi asylum seeker) noted during the interview that both he and people that he knows had experienced persistent minor harassment. He noted there were many forms of harassment, including using dogs to scare people and blocking or jumping up and down in the lifts in the high-rise flats. Although such incidents may be considered as minor, they create a barrier impeding integration. Ager and Strang (2004a: 5) found that small acts, whether of friendship, or perceived unfriendliness, had a disproportionate impact on peoples' feelings of acceptance. These experiences are discussed further below when considering Scottish attitudes.

Legislation was also viewed (Interview: A, Iraqi asylum seeker) as having an impact on integration, positively, in the case of anti-racist policies, or negatively in the case of the removal of employment rights. The lack of the right to work was mentioned by several asylum seekers as a factor they felt negatively influenced Scottish peoples' views, a point noted again below. Coping strategies for such problems are individual, but several noted it is important to try not to treat minor instances too seriously. Personal background and experience again play an important role:

*For me its easier because black people, I cannot say even a minority, we cannot even talk about a minority, we were only three women in our university where have how many thousand, only three African women ... so I am already used to being a minority of a minority. I am already used to it; it's not easy for others. But I always tell them have positive thought, not always think negatively. (H, Congolese refugee)*

Uncertainty over the attitudes of Scottish people towards asylum seekers can act as a barrier to integration. One asylum seeker (O, Angolan asylum seeker) asked during the research (field notes, September 2006) for my views on asylum seekers being in Scotland. At that time she felt that many Scottish people did not want asylum seekers here, but commented that it is not the fault of the asylum seekers that they are here, and they want to be able to work. There was frustration at having nothing to do, and despite having spent three years in the city she felt that she didn't know Glasgow, and hadn't got to meet Scottish people. The frustration at having nothing to do is considered further in Chapter 6 in the discussion of the problem of waiting. Attitudes towards asylum are now discussed further, as an important factor that has to be taken into consideration when promoting integration.

### **5.3.3 Scottish Attitudes**

Public attitudes towards asylum seekers are a difficult and complex area, influenced by a range of factors. Crawley (2005: 55) argues that there is a need to establish an evidence base which enables a better understanding of the factors that influence attitudes towards asylum. Understanding these attitudes was beyond the scope of this research, but it is useful to include a brief indicative discussion based on the material from the participant observation and the recent research noted above on Scottish

attitudes to asylum seekers. The material from the drop-ins, although only illustrative, is interesting as it is based on observations of Scottish people who have frequent and often sustained contact with asylum seekers and who could therefore be expected to have greater knowledge and understanding of their circumstances. The various views concerning the benefits individuals felt they gained from volunteering, frustrations, friendships and 'them and us' attitudes are discussed. These views are then set in the wider context of the research carried out on public attitudes by Lewis (2006), which considers the range of attitudes uncovered during that research and the factors considered influential. The conclusion brings together the different aspects of the integration process that have been discussed in this chapter.

The participant observation at the drop-ins provided some indication of the ways in which contact between asylum seekers and Scottish residents can build friendships and create frustrations, and of the difficulties of overcoming perceptions of difference for both groups. In some cases, the activities undertaken at the drop-in were very important in shaping views and arguments over money in the second-hand shop created a wider potential scope for tensions. Frustration often arose from different expectations, or a lack of clarity over expectations, this was particularly evident during the shop sessions where rules had been put into place in order to manage the number of people, but which could lead to arguments from people who may have been waiting for a long period of time. Such arguments could create resentment on both sides and also some negative assumptions; if there weren't such rules there would be chaos or people would be stealing. Such tensions are probably a natural outcome of service provider/client relations, but are more problematic if they create or feed into broader negative perceptions of asylum seekers. Housing was an issue over which resentment was on occasion expressed, particularly when it was felt that those who had been granted leave to remain were given houses faster, or better houses, than those who had been born in this country and were also on the waiting list. One view expressed by a volunteer was that 'we struggle as well' (field notes, June 2006). It is not known how deep-seated or widespread such views were, but they were expressed and resonate with the findings of recent research discussed below.

Although such frustrations were a frequent occurrence during the fieldwork period, there were also strong friendships, which provided support through the difficulties of the asylum process. In addition to social contact outside the drop-ins, some volunteers also provided help with letters, or looking after children, or accompanied people on visits to lawyers or the Home Office. Some volunteers also drew on their experiences at the drop-in to give talks to other groups, therefore promoting wider understanding. There were therefore many positive examples of friendship and support, which both encouraged integration and helped increase understanding of asylum seekers' circumstances. Close contact with asylum seekers had in these instances, helped to increase positive attitudes. A 'them and us' situation could, however, be difficult to overcome, and was often expressed as 'they do this' or 'they do that' as a generic reference for all asylum seekers. Recognition of such difference is not necessarily problematic where it can promote recognition of different needs and sensitivity to different experiences. Zetter (1991), however, highlights the power of labelling refugees, and the ways in which labelling can act to include and exclude, to stereotype and control. The politicisation and increased visibility of asylum arguably makes the label of asylum seeker even more powerful. The power of such bureaucratic labelling was noted by one interviewee:

*The asylum system really put us in, I think, [a] desperate situation, unknown situation. You don't know what will happen tomorrow; even if you are a professional you feel like you are helpless, you are nothing. So it is a system which deprives you [of] the feeling of being a human, this is what I can say. And all the time, I have myself to fight against it, because the system want to dehumanise me, all the time, even now I've got the right to stay I still have the reflex of an asylum seeker. I still talk about myself as an asylum seeker, sometimes I think 'oh can I do this' because being asylum seeker it is like not being allowed to, and now I am allowed to my brain is not used to it. (H, Congolese refugee)*

The asylum system therefore emphasises difference, and this can have a powerful effect not only on asylum seekers, but on how they are perceived by Scottish people. These differences can both help to promote integration as Scottish people learn about the nature of the asylum system and offer support, or impede integration through the highlighting of otherness. The factors that were found by Lewis (2006) to influence Scottish attitudes to asylum seekers are now considered further.

Lewis's (2006) study highlighted the importance of public understanding to integration and found that though there was a generally more tolerant attitude in



Scotland than in the rest of the UK, there was nevertheless considerable hostility towards asylum seekers. Hostility often reflected perceived double standards and injustice and the problems of relative deprivation. The problems of the initial dispersal period also exerted a strong influence, although less so in areas where asylum seekers are actually housed. The media plays an important role in shaping opinions and providing information. Positive political leadership in Scotland has also played a role in increasing positive attitudes. Lewis (2006: 29) also found that, although outright racism is largely socially unacceptable, prejudice against asylum seekers does not attract social sanctions. Challenges therefore remain with attitudes towards asylum seekers, which need to be addressed to help promote integration. As this chapter has indicated there are a number of important strands to the integration process and these attitudes interact with the other aspects which have been discussed above.

## **CONCLUSION**

Integration is a complex and multi-faceted process, experienced by each individual in a different way. Service providers often deal with different aspects, the importance of which varies for each individual asylum seeker. This chapter has considered some different aspects of the integration process, as broadly categorised in Figure 1 and Table 7, and how these interact within the context of Glasgow. There are many different routes to integration and these can often be shaped by how service providers understand integration. Many noted that it is a very difficult process to measure and to try and provide resources in the most effective way. Even effective stepping stones to integration, such as language acquisition, present challenges. Involving asylum seekers in the services that are provided to them is another means of promoting integration and has been done in a number of formal and informal ways. Integration, however, involves not just services but also the ability to access them and this chapter has also considered different sources of support which asylum seekers may access, including friendship and other networks and drop-in centres. These factors that influence integration cannot be separated from the context within which they take place, and this chapter therefore looked at experiences of living in Glasgow, the

difficulties of adjusting to different circumstances, and Scottish attitudes. The range of the issues considered in this chapter, which often interact, indicates the difficult nature of integration. It is not a process which can be prescribed, but rather one in which the provision of opportunity and enabling people to take these opportunities where they wish to do so is important. There are a number of challenges, which are discussed further in the chapters on challenges and those on dealing with asylum process and evaluating integration.

## 6. DEALING WITH THE ASYLUM PROCESS

### INTRODUCTION

The asylum process presents a number of difficulties for those involved: coping with the application process, the potentially lengthy delays before receiving a decision and responding to the outcome. This chapter discusses the different ways in which stakeholders and asylum seekers deal with the challenges presented throughout the asylum process. The discussion continues the analytic theme of the impact of policy on target groups and stakeholders first addressed in Chapter 4. The chapter covers three separate but related aspects of the asylum process, the changing needs of asylum seekers, waiting for a decision and the end of the process. The impacts of the asylum process on individuals, communities, and service providers are considered, together with the effects on integration processes. The focus is primarily on grassroots experiences, which contrasts with and complements the strategic focus of discussion in Chapter 4. The issue of changing needs is one that has been highlighted in previous chapters, as the support needs of asylum seekers change not only as a result of policy changes, but also as a result of reaching different stages in the asylum process. The first section considers the different forms of support that are needed over time and at different stages of the process, and the changes arising from shifts in policy and process, including the broader distribution of asylum seekers around the city and the ongoing legacy case review.<sup>13</sup> A key issue for many of the asylum seeking population in Glasgow is the length of time spent waiting for a decision. This period presents many practical and emotional challenges, and issues of finding meaningful activity, the impacts of limbo and family dynamics are discussed. The outcome of the asylum process, whether negative or positive, brings fresh challenges, and the issues of destitution, removals and moving on are examined in the final section.

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<sup>13</sup> As noted in Chapter 4, the legacy case review is a review of all outstanding asylum cases from pre-March 2007, in order to clear the backlog of cases from before the introduction of the New Asylum Model.

## 6.1 CHANGING NEEDS

The dispersal of asylum seekers has been ongoing since 2000 and, as indicated in Chapter 4, many changes have taken place in that period. Policy reforms have been introduced with the intention of speeding up both the decision-making process and the removal of unsuccessful applicants. There have also been local changes with the regeneration programme in Glasgow, and changes in the accommodation contract. These changes have not only altered the landscape for integration work, but affect the support needs of those going through the asylum process, and therefore the work of agencies involved with asylum seekers. Changes also arise as people reach (or are in limbo in) different stages of the asylum process and require different services and types of information. These different stages exert different pressures on people that are dealt with in different ways. This section considers changes in forms of support, and the impacts of new processes.

### 6.1.1 Forms of Support

Changes in the forms of support that are provided for asylum seekers have come about as services have developed over the dispersal period in Glasgow and responded to the shifting needs of the population. As indicated in Chapter 4, drop-in groups in this study have noticed a shift towards providing more emotional support, and different forms of practical support for those who are nearing the end of the asylum process. Different ways of providing support have become necessary as destitution and detention have become more pressing issues and new processes have arisen, such as the legacy review, for which people require information and assistance.

Both drop-in groups commented on the changes that had arisen since they began providing their services shortly after dispersal began:

*In practical ways it's meant having to give food to people whose support has been stopped... before when people got food it was mainly new people coming, maybe there was a gap [before] getting support [payments]. There's ... also emotional support because people are under so much stress – not that you can change [that], though you*

*can signpost people to places where they can get help, but really often its only emotional – though not only, I think that's very important, but its emotional support that you can give to people. (Community Group Co-ordinator, Balornock)*

Services have had to adjust not only to people reaching the end of the asylum process, but also to changes in government policies:

*When people came first of all it was certainly more humanitarian need that we were helping with because ... there were voucher systems, they were coming really with nothing and they only had the basic things in their house and they didn't have ... money ... Obviously now they can budget a lot better. Then [there's] the fact that obviously we're providing a cheap alternative to the shops for them to be able to buy things that are necessary. But certainly now, we're seeing many more destitute asylum seekers, because their benefits are withdrawn from them. Therefore we're moving towards how to actually support the destitute asylum seekers. So there has been a change dependent on government policy really, and how asylum seekers have managed to get themselves settled and also be able to manage their own affairs. (Community Group Co-ordinator, Sighthill)*

Adjustments may also be required in meeting practical needs, as the addition of a new accommodation provider has led to more variation in the standards of accommodation. In addition to trying to provide material and emotional support, new forms of grassroots support have continued to develop in response to issues such as destitution and detention, both of which are discussed further below. These problems have put new pressures on individuals, families, communities and service providers. Action has included protests at the Home Office and in neighbourhoods where dawn raids have been taking place, and the forming of support groups for those who have been detained. For some, participating in such direct action is a way of demonstrating support and expressing solidarity:

*And showing people your concern in the campaigning, I sometimes go to ... like the family who were deported ... there was an email came up from Unity and I went over to Brand Street and a lot of their friends had come, ... in the end it didn't make any difference but it could have, and it certainly meant a lot to people that you were there with them and apparently its good that the Home Office knew that people were there supporting, that they have to go through the proper procedures then if they know that there's people noticing. So that's changed, that wouldn't have been something we had to do when people first came. And I think that's particularly hard when people have been here a long time. (Community Group Co-ordinator, Balornock)*

For others such direct action is not only about support, but also about trying to force a change in government policy. One interviewee suggested that such forms of action, together with other work, have been influential:

*Manning the barricades is not the only way to achieve change, in fact one would argue that its probably the least likely group of people that authorities will negotiate with, however, it's also true to say that sometimes it's the heat and light created ... that will bring the authorities to the table to negotiate, at least that seems to be what's happened in Scotland, I would probably venture to suggest that its been the very public campaign, including civil disobedience around dawn raids, that has created part of the context for the review of legacy cases to provide the solution that it has, with different folk playing different roles. (Community Development Co-ordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

These different forms of action and support - more emotional support and changes in practical support from humanitarian aid to campaigning activity - are not only new responses to challenges of the asylum process. The changes also demonstrate the progress that has been made relating to integration, as communities offer support to those who are under threat of being removed. There are numerous political and economic concerns which influence policy decisions, the role of such action is therefore not quantifiable, but it has played a role, and has helped to shape the Scottish response to asylum. Changes have also arisen due to changes within the asylum seeking population itself, such as the development of self-help associations and community groups discussed in Chapter 5. There is therefore a need for support in terms of capacity building and working with different groups. The changes in support discussed above arose within a broader context of policy change, which is now discussed further.

### **6.1.2 New Processes and New Areas**

Another important change affecting the forms of support provided is the legacy review, or case resolution programme, which applies to applications submitted prior to the implementation of the New Asylum Model. In Scotland, according to figures from the Scottish Refugee Council (2007a), the number of claimants in the legacy programme is 1413 supported families in Glasgow, 50 non-accommodated families in Glasgow, 40 families outside of Glasgow, 480 supported single asylum claimants, over 200 non-supported single asylum claimants, and 120 unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

The legacy review is an important change in the integration context and is therefore also discussed in other chapters with regard to policy, integration and funding. As each applicant's case is reviewed on a case-by-case basis, the applicant is provided with a questionnaire which offers an opportunity to ensure that the Home Office has all the relevant up-to-date information. The time scales are short as the forms have to be returned within 21 days, and help is often required in completing them. Those who have been involved in integration activities and volunteering often require references and other supporting material. The aim of the legacy review is to review all relevant cases within 5 years. Minutes of the Cross Party Group on Asylum Seekers and Refugees (2007) indicated that 800 families would have been through the system by March 2008 of whom 80-90% were expected to be granted leave to remain. As more positive decisions arise out of the legacy review, successful applicants require help accessing housing and employment, issues that are discussed further below in Section 6.3.3. There were concerns that there may be gaps in accessing new support systems. The legacy review is both a positive, and a challenging development, as one service provider noted:

*I think one of the biggest challenges/successes/opportunities/nightmares is the legacy review. All of those things I think, because the contribution that refugee voices and communities have made to the debate in Scotland has created a bit of a bulwark against a really negative policy framework, and that has coincided with the government's expedient decision to deal with a backlog... it is providing a positive outcome for lots and lots of families, many of whom are in leadership positions in community organisations, and who are also being recognised for their community effort, which is not something that we knew would happen at the start of this. But there's a pressure on services to cope with the new needs, and that could hit people with a second wave of temporary destitution apart from anything else. (Community Development Co-ordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

As the legacy review demonstrates, changing needs often arise out of changes in policy and process. As discussed in Chapter 4, the new accommodation contract in Glasgow has brought in a new private accommodation provider, and spread out accommodation provision more widely across the city. Some of the implications for service providers were discussed previously in Chapter 4. For asylum seekers affected by changes in housing it created uncertainty and anxiety over the process of moving. One (M, Iranian asylum seeker) spoke of the distress she had felt when receiving a letter telling her she was to be moved, and said that both she and her daughter had cried with worry (field notes, March 2007). In this case, she was given

a house in the same area and was both relieved, and pleased with having an extra bedroom (field notes, June 2007). Others felt uncertain as to whether they wished to remain in the area or not:

*I think I am moving this year because the building going down and I don't know where I am going... Sometimes I said ... give me just the flat not far, because I know more people in this area, and sometimes I said I don't know... (N, Algerian asylum seeker)*

In some areas of the city, concerns over the moves, and a lack of information led to protests and asylum seekers refusing to move. Although these issues were resolved, mixed feelings remained, and relocation to new areas or to accommodation that may have been of a different standard required some extra support from service providers and other contacts. There were concerns over whether children would be able to access the same schools or local activities, and about moving away from local sources of support. One interviewee (H, Congolese refugee) likened the impact of the new contract to a new dispersal suggesting that, although people were still together in Glasgow, the new contract had, over the transition period, caused a breakdown in asylum seekers' social networks, and disturbed their equilibrium, which then had to be rebuilt. Connections which provided support in the integration process, such as those discussed in Chapter 5.2, were therefore affected by the changing context. It was noted in Chapter 5 that such networks can be a vital source of support. As one Refugee Community Organisation (RCO) leader phrased it:

*We need this support network for our integration. I can give you an example. Now I'm only the one living here, [the others] went because they are knocking down [the flats].... Yesterday one of the lad[ies] came here say, 'oh I feel so lonely' but she's in Glasgow. You see this Karibu helped us to build a network, and today if I say 'oh me I go to live in London', I will break, no. You see ... we need to build bonds, links between us and with others and this, you cannot do it alone, it is very difficult. I know there are exceptional people who can do it, but I think it is much easier as a group. (H, Congolese Refugee)*

The changes in processes, particularly the legacy review, have also brought about positive outcomes, not only for individuals, but also for the integration process. Many of those in leadership positions in RCOs have gained leave to remain, either through the original asylum process or as part of the legacy review. Capacity building of these groups had previously been hindered by turnover or loss of participants who were unsuccessful in their asylum application. A greater stability in



leadership gives refugee groups a stronger platform on which to develop the services which they provide for their communities and their participation in the integration process. The legacy review also relates to the problems of waiting for a decision and to the outcomes of the asylum process, both of which are discussed further below.

## **6.2 WAITING FOR A DECISION**

The length of time which asylum seekers spend waiting for a decision, in some cases up to seven years, is an important factor behind changing needs. The waiting period puts a great strain on those awaiting a decision and impacts on later integration efforts. It is an area where the differences in the Scottish approach can be seen, as Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government have taken the view that integration must begin with arrival and cannot be delayed until the initial decision is reached. The disadvantages of lengthy case processing have been recognised by the UK government, and the New Asylum Model was brought in to speed up the process, as discussed in Chapter 4. However, it was still an issue for many of those who were dispersed to Glasgow, and as noted above, it has affected refugee integration strategies. Doubts also remain over the extent to which the NAM will be able to speed up the process, as it is possible that, if the number of asylum applications rises again, the appeals process may lengthen the overall decision-making period. This may be particularly an issue in Scotland where awaiting a judicial review can be a lengthy process. One interviewee noted that it was taking 14 months to get a date for a judicial review in Scotland. There are number of issues around the time spent waiting including the problems of finding meaningful activity, dealing with the tensions between settling and uncertainty of status, and the impact on family decisions and dynamics. These issues are often hard to separate from concerns around integration funding as discussed further in Chapter 7.

### 6.2.1 Meaningful Activity

An important feature of the waiting period and of dealing with the asylum process in general, is the need to find meaningful activity. Such activity can take many forms, and varies according to individual preference and requirements, but may include educational opportunities, volunteering, or activism relating to integration and the asylum process. These activities take on greater importance as asylum seekers do not have the legal right to work.<sup>14</sup> Other activities are therefore needed to maintain skills, improve English and promote integration, as well as provide a diversion from the anxieties of waiting for a decision.

Access to education is an important avenue of activity for asylum seekers for several reasons, as discussed in Chapter 5. For many people education provides or helps to improve English skills, which are themselves an important foundation for other integration activities. It also provides an opportunity to maintain, or add skills, and to prepare for future employment in the event of gaining leave to remain. There are difficulties, however, in accessing educational opportunities, certain classes may be in high demand and have waiting lists and as indicated previously in Chapter 5, childcare is also a major factor in restricting access. Options may also be restricted depending on previous education and language ability. One asylum seeker (F, Sri Lankan asylum seeker) discussed feeling bored now that she had completed English and computing courses and was finding it difficult to access other courses due to a lack of childcare. She had been waiting for a decision for three years and felt that the stress of waiting for a decision was making her husband ill (field notes, March, 2006). Those who have been here for some time may have progressed through the system and then hit a point where neither further progression nor a move into work are possible, as illustrated by one ESOL provider:

*We've got people who've gone right through, who've got up to HNC level and have achieved it and are stuck because they then want to go on to university and can't. We have a nurse in that position and she's really become very disheartened because she did English for three years then did NC, then did HNC, she gained a student of the year award or something, she was a nurse in her country of origin, their case still hasn't been heard and they've been here for 6 years so I think what she's going to do just to*

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<sup>14</sup> Under EU Council Directive (2003/9/EC) asylum seekers who have not received an initial decision within a year should be given conditional access to the labour market, but this rarely applies.

*keep herself ticking over is come back and follow IELTS,<sup>15</sup> so just in case everything falls into place she'll be able to show the nursing and midwifery council that she's ready to sit the IELTS exam, or whatever but its really hard. (ESOL provider)*

As noted in Chapter 4, access to university education for asylum seekers in Scotland has recently been widened (The Scottish Government, 2007b), but this only applies to those under the age of 25 who have completed their secondary education in Scotland. Further widening would be welcomed:

*I'm pleased to see the Scottish Government saying that asylum seeking children should be able to access university education and not be treated as foreign students paying a whopping big fee that they couldn't afford... I think the next meaningful stage would be if the government could bring that into colleges, because I think that's where a lot of the young people will go, so if there could be a scheme that can allow asylum-seeking young people to attend college on the same basis as an indigenous Glaswegian then I think that would be a step forward. (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council)*

These restrictions are an important issue relating to young people's requirements for advice and information:

*We've been working with Careers Scotland ... and the main thing that they've done is about providing information. They did a number of focus groups with young people and what young people said is we want to know, we want a reality check, we want to know what our real options are... so its about getting accurate information to them as early as possible which we decided would be round about S2, because that's when careers talks and things tend to start... they try to encourage the uptake of volunteering among all young people, but with the asylum seekers having been given first of all the information that this is actually one of their major options and they really need to think seriously about it. (Education Provider)*

Perceived difficulties may also be as important as the practical barriers. One interviewee indicated an impression that asylum status itself could be a potential barrier to accessing courses:

*My husband in my country is engineer mechanic. And he bring all the paper and he must do the English from course [at] North Glasgow [college]. But they, this year when he's going [to] register and he do [the] exam and is fine, but after two weeks, I think, the man said is full. But my husband is not happy because he said I don't think so, maybe because I am asylum seeker. And my husband is gone to the NASS because he was very very angry and he said why, I need just to [be taught] the name for the pièce [parts] everything like that. And he said the lady [at] NASS said ok, try this year because she phone and the man said believe me is full class. And he try this year and he said if I have answer I go quickly do my job. (N, Algerian asylum seeker)*

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<sup>15</sup> International English Language Testing System

Work by the Refugee Women's Strategy Group (2007: 6) also highlighted the feeling among some women that the stigma attached to being an asylum seeker made it difficult to integrate and to access opportunities. Such feelings also therefore need to be considered in providing opportunities and information on meaningful activities for asylum seekers awaiting a decision.

Education is not the only activity open to asylum seekers as it is also possible to volunteer, and to take part in integration focused activities. In some cases these activities will again require childcare provision, and adequate language skills. Volunteering and networks, as well as the difficulties that can arise around limited provision, were discussed in Chapter 5. Each of these activities offers benefits that can help to address the difficulties of waiting. There are barriers, however, and a lack of activities can exacerbate difficulties including boredom, isolation and anxiety. Although both asylum seeking men and women are active in integration activities, there can be differences in accessing services and in the types of support available. In both the drop-in groups accessed during the fieldwork, the users tended to be primarily women. Although this was by default rather than by design, as the services were open to all, there may also be circumstances where individuals may be more comfortable accessing single sex provision. There was recognition that more support might be needed for men and both drop-in groups had at different points added a men's group, one of which was no longer running, the other started towards the end of the fieldwork period and was in the process of becoming established. There are several projects around the city specifically for women, and there were suggestions that integration, or at least contact with services may be easier in some ways for women as they often encounter services such as health and education through their children. Childcare, is however, a huge barrier in accessing services, particularly college courses. The Refugee Women's Strategy Group (2007: 7), while acknowledging that childcare is a general problem, suggested that the impact on asylum seekers is disproportionate due to their fundamental need to attend language classes. Lack of childcare can increase difficulties in accessing support and feelings of isolation.

Although the lack of employment rights is a problem for all asylum seekers, one interviewee suggested that this enforced inactivity could be more difficult for men:

*Because for the lady no problem if she don't work, or, because she is busy with the children, with the house, and for the men is very difficult – go just to the college and go back home – go to the shopping and back home. (N, Algerian asylum seeker)*

Women who have worked previously, however, may also be concerned over the loss of their professional status and about maintaining their skills. These problems can be worsened when there is a lengthy delay in receiving a decision.

Anger, frustration and stress were expressed at the length of time spent waiting for a decision and the restrictions on activities. The Refugee Women's Strategy Group (2007: 6) found that many women described themselves as feeling very isolated with no family, friends or community support. During a conversation with a group of women from a mix of different national backgrounds at one drop-in centre, they expressed the frustration and anger they felt with their situation (field notes June 2006). The feelings arose from the difficulties of waiting for so long, being unable to work, and having little money. The view was that it was a hard regime, and seemed more so than in other countries where the perception was that it was easier to get a passport or to work. Part of the difficulty in accessing activities is judging how far to get involved with local activities, when one still only has temporary status. The difficulties of living life on hold are now discussed further.

### **6.2.2 On Hold**

As indicated above, part of the difficulty of waiting for an asylum decision and dealing with the asylum process is the tension between the uncertainty of status, and settling and integrating into life in Glasgow. As Brekke (2004: 35) highlights, however, some temporary integration is inevitable; contact with people and institutions outside the home, particularly for families with children, is both unavoidable and initiates integration. The uncertainty of the outcome of an asylum application, however, in terms both of when the decision will come and what form it

will take, and the possibility of return, exerts a strong influence, creating anxiety for those who are waiting. This section discusses some of the difficulties in this balance between everyday decisions and actions which necessarily further the process of settling in the receiving community, and the awareness of the possibility of return. These include decisions around one's home and lifestyle, and tensions around the support which is provided from different agencies.

Part of the balance between different possible outcomes involves decisions around personalising and making one's home more comfortable, which may be important in feeling more at home and establishing a safe space, but also involves acquiring items which will be lost in the event of a negative outcome to the asylum case. One interviewee commented in this way on the difficulties of waiting:

*You like, [for] example in your house, you like do something, you like buy something, and say oh my god if the Home Office come in 5 o'clock in the early morning and you don't take nothing with you – what happen to you – yeah is very difficult (N, Algerian asylum seeker)*

Another interviewee (A, Iraqi asylum seeker) highlighted the way in which the difficulty of household decisions interacted with asylum regulations. He argued (interview, July 2007) that many come here, often from countries with few resources, see everything around them, and that it is human nature when one feels safe to want to possess things. Therefore some might work illegally, which risks exploitation, and creating problems with the asylum claim. He further argued that this illegal working does not prepare people to be law-abiding citizens, and this may create problems in the future. The likelihood of work rights being restored is minimal as the policy direction has instead been to focus on speeding up the decision-making process. Thousands of people have already spent a number of years reliant on the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) and, as indicated above, there is some uncertainty about how effectively the NAM will be able to speed up the process. These decisions around how to deal with life in limbo, with minimal resources, are therefore likely to continue to be pertinent.

The support that is provided (which is around 70% of income support levels<sup>16</sup>) constrains resources, as do other restrictions on time spent away from NASS accommodation and visitors allowed, both of which require permission. The role of bodies such as the Home Office, which have multiple functions, can also create mixed feelings, as they not only provide support, but also instigate removals when a claim is unsuccessful. Many other agencies also provide help with different aspects of dealing with the asylum process and waiting for a decision. While this help is necessary and welcomed, there is always the knowledge that the support can be undermined or removed by a negative outcome to the asylum case. Frustration at these different aspects was expressed:

*One part I like the Home Office give the answer for all the asylum people for any country. And another part when I see the NASS help if you have something wrong in your house, if you have, I don't know, if you need help you have many association you must go and everyone help you and in here in the church if you have some problem she do something for you and after that he [Home Office] tell you - go back to your country! Hmmm..... Is very difficult. (N, Algerian asylum seeker)*

Although life is in many ways on hold whilst waiting for a decision, as education and career-related opportunities are very limited, and freedom of movement restricted, for some it is an opportunity to get involved in integration activity and campaigning on asylum issues. Several interviewees commented on the role that the asylum community has played in integration activity in Glasgow and how Glasgow City Council is keen that as many successful asylum seekers as possible will choose to stay in Glasgow on a long-term basis. Yet there will inevitably be the loss of people whose claims are refused, or who choose to move away after receiving a positive decision. The balance applies not only to asylum seekers, but also to those providing support and encouraging integration for those with a temporary status, in the knowledge that not all will be able, or willing to stay. Integration support is still viewed as worthwhile, however, in benefiting people for the period of time they are in Glasgow and improving community relations. And within this period of limbo, although in many ways choices are restricted, in other ways family life continues and

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<sup>16</sup> Support levels are set at 70% of income support as asylum applicants are not responsible for paying utility bills.

decisions have to be made. These impacts on family life and dynamics will now be discussed further.

### **6.2.3 Family Decisions and Dynamics**

The waiting period also impacts on family decisions and dynamics in various ways. This section discusses the strain on families of dealing with the asylum process, concerns around children, which may include those children from whom parents have become separated during the asylum process, and having to make decisions about the future while status remains uncertain.

Education is an area which is felt by providers to have been particularly successful in integrating children, with many achieving academic success and settling in to school life in Scotland. As one provider commented:

*I think our strengths are in the way that we've managed to get children integrated into schools, get them taking part in opportunities that they would never have had and becoming confident and successful. And that doesn't necessarily just mean the high fliers, but all the ones who come along and are able to take part in school life. I think that's been our big success. (Education Provider)*

Anecdotally, it was noted that many who get status choose to remain in the local area or keep their children in the same school. An interviewee working in the community commented:

*Some people choose to stay in the area because their children are very settled in school. One family have actually, they've got a house a way out of Glasgow but their children are still coming into the school, at this moment in time. One family they've actually got a mortgage, but they've chosen to buy a house in the area so their daughter can continue at school. (Community Group Co-ordinator, Balornock)*

As discussed above, there are restrictions on how far children can progress in the education system, depending on a number of factors, such as when they started school in Scotland. Other impacts on children also arise from the strain of their family circumstances, and continuing concerns over racial harassment. Chapter 4 discussed the balance that schools have to find between supporting those who are concerned at the possibility of removal, or who have been detained and released, and maintaining schools as a place of refuge from these problems. Recent research (The



Scottish Government, 2007a) has also noted the problem of racism, much of which goes unreported, and may largely take place outside schools. It was also noted that indigenous white Scots are not the only perpetrators of racist abuse, which appears to be multifaceted. Similar problems were noted during an interview with an education provider:

*I think the other thing is that there are instances when asylum seekers can be perpetrators of racist incidents as well as victims and I think we need to be aware of that, there's racism between communities. But we find the biggest, there are things like boys are more likely to be perpetrators and girls are more likely to be victims so there's something more than race going on there and its how do you tease all that out and get to the bottom of it. A lot of racist incidents take place after school or in school holidays or children who know to keep their mouth shut while they're in school ... but when you're out in the community do what you like (Education Provider)*

The joint inspection of services for the children of asylum seekers in Glasgow (HM Inspectorate of Education, 2007: 5) also found that almost all children had experienced forms of racial harassment, and children and parents tried to limit these by staying at home.

The difficulties that can be faced by children add to the tensions and strains facing families awaiting decisions. One asylum seeker, who did not wish to be named, noted that there was resentment towards him from one of his children, for his activities that led to the family fleeing to the UK to seek asylum, and the subsequent impact on family life. Others working with asylum seekers have also noted that the strain on parents can affect the children. During a discussion prior to beginning participant observation in one drop-in centre, the co-ordinator stressed that it was a difficult period for many of those using the service due to the anxiety of the asylum process, the stress of waiting and the impact of dawn raids (field notes, December 2005). It was pointed out that many were nearing the end of the process and some were also having problems with neighbours and racist abuse. Some were very unhappy, which affected the children, particularly when they were used as interpreters. The difficulties of children taking on new roles were exacerbated by cultural and societal differences, as noted in Section 5.3.2. One interviewee expressed concern over the problems of violence in black communities, as a problem with implications for integration that families may have to face in the future:

*Especially now I have one concern when I see what is happening in the black community, children, I always say I don't want this to happen here, what can we do. So this is another how can I say, we haven't yet solved the problems, there is another issue which come, we need to start thinking about (H, Congolese Refugee)*

Many asylum seekers had been separated from children who remained in the country of origin, and this was a constant source of anxiety. In some cases they remained with other family members, in others there had been no contact since leaving. The difficulty of being apart from children was mentioned frequently during the fieldwork. The pain of separation was exacerbated by the length of time spent waiting for a decision, a period when it is not possible to apply for family reunion. For those whose children are in Scotland, there were worries over them losing contact with their roots and growing apart from their extended family:

*It was 10 years ago we left home. What he know about our home? Nothing. What he know about the job I had, he know nothing... I say yes this is what I was ... But nothing, and sometimes when we have communication with home I say someone want to talk to you, they say I don't know him, why should I talk to him. It makes me feel pain, its painful to me. (H, Congolese refugee)*

The complex family dynamics highlight the problems not only of waiting for a decision, but of integration in a context of temporary status. As children attend school and families interact with services some degree of integration occurs. This has been encouraged by Glasgow City Council, and helps families to deal with the isolation and other problems they may face while waiting for a decision on their asylum claim. Yet there are difficulties in maintaining roles and relations within families under the strains of the asylum system. That is not to argue against integration for asylum seekers, but to point out that there is a need to be sensitive to the different needs of family members. Waiting for an outcome to the asylum process is therefore difficult for a numbers of reasons, with the anxieties of waiting, the need to find meaningful activity while in limbo and the strains on families. The decision on the asylum case, however, whether positive or negative, opens up new challenges, both for asylum seekers, and for service providers, which are now discussed.

## **6.3 THE END OF THE PROCESS**

Waiting for a decision on an asylum application is an anxious period which presents a number of difficulties. The process will, however, ultimately culminate in a decision which is intended to lead either to removal back to the country of origin, or to a new life with the right to live and work in the UK. Although one outcome is clearly more welcome than the other, neither is straightforward. A negative decision (or an administrative error) can lead to destitution as support is stopped, and removals are a difficult process for all involved. A positive decision offers security, but also the challenges of starting again in a different country and finding housing and employment. This section discusses three different aspects of the end of the asylum process, destitution, removals, and moving on, and the impact of each of these for individuals and service providers.

### **6.3.1 *Destitution***

Destitution can be an outcome of either policy, as asylum seekers no longer have recourse to public funds once their case is exhausted, or procedural problems, when delays or errors lead to the withdrawal of support. Although asylum seekers may be considered at risk of destitution throughout the asylum process due to the framework of asylum support and restrictions on working, it is most common at the end of the process. It is difficult to know how many destitute asylum seekers there are living in Glasgow, although recent research (Green, 2006: 21) used Home Office refusal and removal figures to estimate that around 353 people in Glasgow would be refused asylum during 2006 and remain in the UK with no access to mainstream NASS support. The difficulty of knowing the numbers of people involved makes co-ordinating and sustaining support more difficult. It also places a strain on individuals themselves and the communities who help to support them.

Limited support is available in the form of accommodation and vouchers, for those whose case has been refused and who are willing to leave, but are unable to do so due to medical or other reasons. Depending on the country of origin there can be

difficulties in obtaining travel documents, or there may be no safe route of return. The criteria for the provision of what is known as Section 4 support is that applicants fulfil at least one of the criteria set out below:

- The person is taking all reasonable steps to leave the UK or place themselves in a position in which they are able to leave the UK. This could include complying with attempts to obtain a travel document to facilitate departure.
- The person is unable to leave the UK by reason of a physical impediment to travel or for some other medical reason.
- The person is unable to leave the UK because in the opinion of the Secretary of State there is currently no viable route of return available.
- The person has made an application in Scotland for judicial review of a decision in relation to their asylum claim or, in England and Wales or Northern Ireland, has applied for such a judicial review and been granted permission or leave to proceed.
- The provision of accommodation is necessary for the purpose of avoiding a breach of a person's Convention rights, within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998. (Borders and Immigration Agency, 2007)

During the interview with the regional manager at BIA Scotland, it was estimated that at that time (July 2007) there were between 450-480 asylum seekers receiving Section 4 support in Glasgow. As the criteria indicate, not all destitute asylum seekers are able to sign up, there are also those who are not willing to do so as they will not agree to a voluntary return should circumstances change. Refugee Action (2006: 4) argue that Section 4 support is in practice only accessed by a small proportion of asylum seekers - the rest have no contact with the authorities and little prospect of a solution. It is further argued that many felt unfairly treated during the

asylum process and are therefore reluctant to engage with the Section 4 process and voluntary return (Refugee Action, 2006: 11). There were some asylum seekers accessing support from the drop-ins during the fieldwork who had taken this stance, maintaining that it would not be safe for them to return to their countries of origin and they would therefore not apply for Section 4. Even for those who do apply there is a gap before Section 4 support commences and the situation places a great strain on individuals, communities and service providers.

Individuals face significant challenges in accessing resources and meeting their essential needs. Being unable to work legally also adds frustration to a difficult situation. One asylum seeker (A, Algerian asylum seeker), who had been without support for a considerable period of time and was reliant on help from friends and charities for food and shelter, frequently expressed her frustration at being unable to use her skills to support herself, having been a teacher in Algeria and taken several college courses in Scotland that had provided her with additional skills that could have enabled her to support herself. Accessing support from friends can put pressure on those who may also have limited resources and may be at risk of eviction for breach of contract by offering a destitute asylum seeker a place to stay. Cunningham and Cunningham (2007: 282) suggest that there have been unprecedented levels of support and generosity from local charities, friends and neighbours which have met families subsistence needs, but these have been short term and could not be sustained. Resources and options may also be limited for service providers. Green (2006: 24) argues that the only sustainable means of supporting people is through the state, but that in the absence of statutory support, voluntary sector agencies are forced to piece together whatever help they can offer to desperately poor people. There are also concerns that support in the community is not only precarious, but may conceal the seriousness of destitution (Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust Inquiry into Destitution Among Refused Asylum Seekers, 2007: 13).

Finding resources to help those who are destitute is challenging, as resources may be limited or intended for other services. Both drop-ins accessed during the fieldwork provided clothing, toiletries and food for those with no or very little money. Other agencies also offer support by providing small payments and other

advice and support. Some felt that it was likely to be a growing issue, and there are efforts to try and co-ordinate resources:

*We've now become linked up with the ... [Asylum Destitution Support Network], that are grouping everyone together to actually try and help destitute asylum seekers, so we're on their website. And we are considering actually having a destitution fund so that instead of having to just give people goods in kind or groceries we could possibly give them a small amount of money because at the moment we can't do that readily and all we can give them is about £2 for the food co-op. It would be better to give them larger sums of money so they could buy more personal items. So at the moment round about 5 people, but it may well increase and I think with the government policy it probably will increase. (Drop in Co-ordinator, Sighthill.)*

There are therefore challenges in providing resources and concerns over people's welfare and the policy of stopping support continues to be questioned. When asked how they were dealing with destitution at the moment one interviewee commented:

*Worryingly; government policy is that a failed asylum seeker should be returned home and should be denied recourse to public funds to encourage him to do so. They set up IOM<sup>17</sup> schemes to help voluntary returns home, to assist with grants and direct assistance. The difficulty comes where there is a long gap between the decision that someone's claim is appeal rights exhausted and enforcement of a removal because that leaves people at risk of being vulnerable for long periods of time. People will go into illegal working, people will disappear and go and stay with friends, so there's difficulties about tracking children, ensuring they go into education, some young single people have been known to disappear down into London and you don't know what's happened to them, so I've got some reservations about it all. (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council)*

Destitution is therefore an example of a highly negative policy outcome for all involved, and is one of the challenges for integration, and for dealing with asylum policy, particularly at the end of the process. It was indicated that it can be particularly problematic due to the long gaps that can ensue between refusal and removals. The issues arising from removals are now discussed further.

### **6.3.2 Removals**

For those asylum seekers whose applications have been unsuccessful, and who do not leave voluntarily, the asylum process will culminate in a forced removal. As indicated above, however, the fact there can be a long gap between notification of a

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<sup>17</sup> IOM – International Organization for Migration

final refusal and removal, contributes to the numbers of those facing destitution at the end of the asylum process. These delays can reflect the logistical difficulties of forced removals, which may strain limited resources. Removals have had a strong impact on integration work in Glasgow, as it has become an issue that has mobilised communities. As noted in Chapter 4, the shift in campaigning activity from protests at the presence of asylum seekers in deprived communities to protests against the removal of asylum seekers from these same communities has been cited as an example of the progress that integration work in Glasgow has achieved. Yet one of the contradictions of promoting integration for asylum seekers is that, while it can be argued it is both essential and worthwhile, being an asylum seeker is a temporary legal status, and some of those involved will be removed. Removals create anxiety and fear for individuals, tensions within communities, and difficulties for service providers.

Removals, particularly the ‘dawn raids’ which are carried out by removing people from their homes in the early hours of the morning, are not only extremely upsetting for those directly affected, but also create fear and anxiety amongst others by reinforcing the insecurity of their situation. Some asylum seekers had also spent brief periods in detention prior to raising new legal action, and this had left a strong impression. One asylum seeker mentioned that she still suffered flashbacks from the three days that she had spent in Dungavel two years previously (field notes July 2007). Removals which had been carried out recently in the neighbourhood were frequently a topic of discussion at the drop-ins and there were discussions around which national group seemed to be the target. Even for those whose cases were still ongoing, knowledge of removals created anxiety, particularly over the regular appointments to sign in with the Home Office:

*I am okay every week. But when I know this month I go [to] the sign, when you go to the Home Office, when the policemen open for you the door you say oh my god maybe I am going to the prison – ohhh. (N, Algerian asylum seeker)*

Although the necessity of removals was generally accepted by service providers and policy makers, as necessary for the legitimacy of the asylum system, and an inevitable outcome for some cases, there was still unease over both the manner in which these were carried out and the delays which left people in vulnerable

situations. Recent research (Arnold et al., 2008) has highlighted concerns over the treatment of asylum seekers during detention and removal, and the use of excessive force. One interviewee also argued that dawn raids in particular sent confusing policy messages over cohesion and integration:

*On the one hand [you've got] a government that's telling you, you should be promoting racial harmony and community cohesion, and on the other hand you've got..., 16 body armour clad people taking a woman and kids out of their home in the early morning and dragging them off in barred vans. Now irrespective of what you might think of the rights and wrongs of that and its place in the asylum system it's got to send an extremely confusing message in terms of cohesion and integration (Community Development Coordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

At the same time, community responses to removals and support for those who had been detained were examples of the strength of cohesion and integration work and of positive responses by receiving communities. But the loss of those who may have been in the neighbourhood for several years affects those who have become involved. The difficulties for schools in supporting those who are worried about being removed, or losing their friends were noted earlier. These difficulties can be exacerbated when families are placed in detention and then released rather than being removed, and then possibly being detained again at a later date. In addition to emotional support there is also often a need for practical information:

*[We are] trying to give a bit more information on the whole system, but also very practically on the things that you can do if you hear that someone's in Dungavel for example, how can you contact them, a lot of people have contacted us and said we've heard that they're in Dungavel, is it ok for us to phone them and the answer is yes it is. And it might actually be quite good, or you might want to get the class to get a card and send it to the person who's in detention. (Education Provider)*

Removals and detention are therefore challenging issues for all involved. They are hard for BIA to enforce for both logistical and resource-based reasons. A study by the National Audit Office (2005b: 1) found that enforced removals present significant practical challenges for the Home Office - unsuccessful applicants may have settled into communities, may disappear, or may raise further legal actions. It was estimated that in 2003-2004 the Immigration Directorates spent £285 million on removals and associated issues, both enforced and voluntary, and around £308 million supporting failed asylum applicants awaiting removal. For service providers such as police and educational institutions, removals present challenges relating to



their other service objectives, and individuals and communities are distressed by the removals process. The problems are closely related to the issue of waiting and the difficulty of the dual but contradictory processes of settling whilst awaiting status. A number of factors contribute to an unwillingness to leave, a fear for personal safety, connections in local communities, and concerns over the fairness of the legal process. It is possible that if the NAM brings about a significant decrease in decision-making time, it may ease the process of removals as people will have had less time to integrate into communities and form support networks. But this is also a concern as there may be less support available to those who may not have exhausted all their options. Removals are an issue where the difficulties of integration, particularly within a context of temporary status have to be confronted, and the realities of the asylum process are unavoidable. They highlight the importance of providing not only emotional and material support during the process of waiting, but also clear and accessible information so that people are prepared for the possible outcomes and informed of their options. As the NAM and the outcomes of the legacy review change the context for integration work in Glasgow, it is possible that funding and support (as discussed further in Chapter 7), may shift more towards advice regarding returns, and integration work with refugees. While those who receive a negative decision have to deal with the issues of return, those who receive leave to remain have to turn to the challenges of moving on with their lives.

### **6.3.3 *Moving On***

Those who receive positive decisions are relieved from the fear of removal and the insecurities of status as asylum seekers, but have to deal with new systems of support, and with finding housing and employment. Although this research focused on the integration of asylum seekers, rather than refugees, the important issues around moving on that emerged during the course of the research need to be briefly discussed. These include issues around housing, employment, and ongoing needs for support.

Housing is a key issue that has to be addressed on receiving status, and is an issue that has been complicated by the introduction of a new private accommodation

provider. On receiving status, there is a 28-day transition period, for finding new housing and transferring to the mainstream social security system. Those in Glasgow Housing Association housing are able to retain their accommodation at least as temporary homelessness accommodation, though there can be issues relating to overcrowding regulations that may prevent it becoming permanent accommodation. For those housed in Angel or YMCA housing this option is not available. Decisions therefore have to be made about staying in the city, what area to live in, and applying for housing. The difficulties were noted by one community group worker:

*[O]ther people felt they actually wanted to stay in the area. Because again they had their friends here, they had their support structures, there were problems, I mean obviously the fact that they had to get out of their houses, they had to get furniture, they had to make sense of the benefits system, they had to make sense of how to pay for their electricity now and things like that, but on the whole they have been happy. [T]hen again others had difficulty getting accommodation that would suit them, so for instance E who had to go over and get private rented accommodation, but her problem is that okay, she's got a good house and she's in a good area, but again most of her friends are over here so that can be the problem. (Community Group Co-ordinator, Sighthill)*

Accessing employment can also be very challenging, as there are barriers relating to both the language and qualifications, and in trying to find a job at an equivalent level to that at which they had been working in their country of origin. Although it is difficult to track people once they have been given status, there was a general awareness among service providers of the difficulties that refugees face in accessing employment:

*I think a lot of the research tends to suggest that people will maybe get access to the intermediate labour market, but will find it very difficult to get back to the same sort of social status that they had when they left, often people will just not be able to find work at all. But on the other hand we've got very positive approaches from the new government on education which means that some people can make some of those moves while they're awaiting their claim to be determined (Community Development Co-ordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

Several of those who came along to the drop-ins who had been given leave to remain referred to the struggle to start their life over again and how much time it took. These difficulties focused around finding housing and re-establishing themselves financially. The years of waiting for a decision take a toll, both in the absence from working life, and by putting life into a limbo from which it has to be resumed. One likened the experience to that of having been released from prison:

*So I wonder how when people come out of prison what will be their life like... can you imagine this is the first time, me, I have to go to take anti-depressant tablet, never in my life...after when they came to tell me you have this [status] and boom I had April, May, June, I was just closing everything, I was at home, I didn't want to talk to people, I was thinking this is it, I'm going to die. And, even now, I continue to take the anti-depressant tablets; I just feel I'm not the [person] I used to be, something has changed. So it's really difficult, this is why if for us who have been in such in this process for long time, 6 years, it is killing, it will kill you physically and mentally. (H, Congolese refugee)*

Although support is provided for the moving on process, if large numbers of positive decisions arise during a short time period out of the legacy case review, this may put a strain on the support services. Glasgow City Council is keen to encourage people to stay in the city and it is therefore important that they are able to access services and support. Despite the positive integration work that has been put in place, receiving status opens up new dimensions to the integration process, which, although they are outwith the scope of this study, are an important part of dealing with the asylum process and the process of integration overall.

## **CONCLUSION**

Dealing with the asylum process presents a number of challenges, not only for applicants, but also for service providers and policy makers. Some of these difficulties are inherent in the difficulties of presenting an application for asylum and awaiting a decision. But needs also change as people reach (or fail to reach) different stages of the process and require different forms of support, or as policies and procedures change. As needs change, services may have to be reassessed, and new forms of support may emerge in response to growing concerns over detention and destitution. Waiting for a decision is a difficult period, with a need to find meaningful activity while it is not possible to work, to deal with the tensions between settling and uncertainty and the impacts on family dynamics. Receiving a decision, whether positive or negative, also leads to new issues which have to be faced, whether relating to return or dealing with new aspects of life in the UK. The problems of dealing with the asylum process not only reflect the impact of policy on asylum seekers and other stakeholders, but also directly affect the context and outcomes for integration work. The approach that has been taken in Scotland, to promote integration for asylum seekers, provides support for dealing with the

difficulties of the asylum process and aids the process of transition once status has been granted. The difficulties of integration for those with temporary status are demonstrated, however, by the problems of removals, although the strong support for those facing this outcome also indicates some of the strengths of integration work. The challenges brought about by dispersal and integration are now considered further, taking into account the need for a strategic response both to the emergence of new issues and the exacerbation of old problems.

## **7. CHALLENGES: OLD PROBLEMS AND NEW CONTEXTS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The theme of challenges is crucial in understanding the impacts of asylum dispersal policy and the concept of integration. The use of the term challenges is intended to convey the difficulties and demands arising out of the asylum process for all those involved. As indicated in previous chapters, the most crucial challenge facing asylum seekers and other stakeholders is that of asylum policy itself. The way in which the asylum system operates creates difficulties both for those awaiting decisions and for those providing services. In Scotland the interaction of devolved service provision with the reserved asylum policy adds another dimension to these challenges, as discussed in Chapter 4. Integration itself is also not a straightforward matter, in either conceptual or practical terms. Within a difficult policy environment, however, there are some specific challenges that are important to consider. These consist of asylum specific issues and existing issues that are intensified in the context of asylum policy. In some cases these arise from the difficulties of service provision in deprived neighbourhoods.

This chapter has three sections that consider the challenges relating to funding and the move towards a more strategic approach to integration; the impact of A8 migration; and the strengths and weaknesses of asylum support. Funding is a key issue in responding to the challenges of dispersal and working towards integration. The scope and availability of funding is affected by policy changes and shapes the work that is carried out. The transition to the new accommodation contract, the ending of some funding streams, and other policy changes such as the legacy review have led to a period of reflection and reassessment, and moves to put integration work onto a more strategic footing. A further important contextual change has arisen from the enlargement of the European Union (EU) in 2004, and the arrival of large numbers of economic migrants from the accession (A8) countries. A8 migration has changed the context for integration work in Glasgow and increased demands for

certain services. It is another factor behind the reconsideration of strategy and resources, and its implications for integration also need to be considered. There is therefore a discussion of the background and levels of A8 migration, the service implications and integration issues. The discussion of challenges concludes with a consideration of strengths and weaknesses in support for asylum seekers as highlighted by participants. These challenges have implications both for dealing with the asylum process and for the process of integration, and the discussion leads into the evaluation of integration in the Scottish context in Chapter 8.

## **7.1 A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO INTEGRATION**

Earlier chapters have noted the extent to which services and support for asylum seekers in Glasgow have developed since dispersal began. A number of factors have prompted a move to reassess asylum support. These factors include the substantial investment in integration work, ongoing policy shifts, and a desire to move to a more strategic approach. As one interviewee noted (ATLAS, May 2007) the emphasis has been on moving from a number of individual projects to more co-ordinated programmes of work. The reactive nature of the early responses to dispersal had the strengths of flexibility and grassroots involvement. There were, however, issues of duplication, and provision in the initial stages of dispersal has been described as chaotic (ODS Consulting, 2007: 46). Important aspects of the move to a more strategic approach are: funding, the work of networks and the relative roles of mainstream and specialist provision.

### **7.1.1 Funding**

Funding is a vital aspect of supporting asylum seekers, and the resources that have been made available have been a vital factor in the progress achieved in promoting integration. Resources have been a vital issue as the initial contract, while covering the costs of housing, did not include extra support for additional support services such as police and education, which found considerable extra work arising from

dispersal. Support has come from a number of sources including the Scottish Government, ATLAS<sup>18</sup>, the National Lottery, the Home Office and a range of other grant funding bodies. Table 8 indicates some of the key sources.

**Table 8: Investment in Asylum Support in Glasgow**

<b>SOURCE</b>	<b>PERIOD</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Scottish Refugee Integration Forum	2003/04-2007/08	£3,110,317
Home Office	2002/03-2006/07	£822,616
Integration Resources <sup>19</sup>	2002/03-2007/08	£6,135,000
ATLAS	2002/03-2007/08	£2,637,800
<b>Combined</b>	<b>2002/03-2007/08</b>	<b>£12,705,733</b>

*Source:* ODS Consulting (2007: 41) using data from ATLAS Partnership; Scottish Government; Home Office; and Glasgow Community Planning Ltd. Matched funding is not included.

Table 8 provides an indication of the resources involved in promoting integration and supporting asylum seekers in Glasgow, but does not include all the ways in which projects may have secured matched funding or indicate where money from existing budgets has been redirected into asylum work. The figures refer to funding for project work, but there has also been investment into teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) and into infrastructure. Several participants commented on the way that funding impacts on their work:

*We've been fortunate so far. We've got the SRIF funding for the crèche, but we got much less this year and as it stands we don't have enough to keep going right throughout the year with the childcare we need... Somebody from the voluntary action fund who administers it now is going to meet with us and be able to give some pointers. And we get integration resources for the drop-in and apparently that's the final year of that source of income so we don't quite know if there'll be anything to replace that or if there'll be anything beyond that – but in terms of the language class and all our activities, to be able to provide a crèche is really essential and also having money to give the volunteers travelling expenses and materials... [What] we are providing ... depends on financial resources and also volunteers – we certainly couldn't do what we are doing without volunteers. (Community group Co-ordinator, Balornock)*

<sup>18</sup> ATLAS: Action on Teaching and Learning for Asylum Seekers was part of the EQUAL programme funded through the European Social Fund and ran between 2002-2007

<sup>19</sup> Integration resources are funded by the Scottish Government and channelled through the community planning structures.

There are therefore constraints on the regularity of provision and uncertainties over future resources. As discussed in Chapter 6, there are also difficulties in responding to issues such as destitution. Thus there are concerns about overstretching resources:

*I always recognise that like all community development you can't do it without communities. Even if you take on board that, and the contribution of other agencies, the paradox that I think we're in, is that our span of influence is significant, very significant. 80-120 organisations in the city are to some extent engaged in refugee integration and community cohesion efforts. The problem that we have as a team of four workers in the community development team here, is to be able to produce the depth that we would like in some of that work, we've got big resourcing challenges (Community Development Co-ordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

The availability and nature of funding can also lead to the need to prioritise, or target those considered to be particularly in need of assistance:

*The other thing that we've done this year is that ... we've funded a project for unaccompanied young people, it's a kind of 'hodgepodge' of funding ... We realised that the curriculum that we're offering is completely inappropriate ... so we set up the 16+ steps into further education course ... that means we have to run fewer adult classes because we just have this slice of the cake. But it's something that we feel quite committed to, and feel that these young people, they need some hope and they need some help. (ESOL provider)*

Funding therefore has an impact across different sectors, and at different levels including community groups, large voluntary organisations and further education colleges. Despite these constraints a huge amount of progress has been achieved since dispersal started. But issues of funding concern not only the work of individual projects or organisations, but also how efficiently resources have been allocated and used. There have been several issues identified through evaluations and by those working at a strategic level which include duplication, a lack of co-ordination and the difficulties of a competitive funding environment with different projects vying for the same resources. A competitive funding environment can strain collaboration across service providers. There is also a need to balance between tried and tested approaches and innovations which may not always be successful. There have also been numerous changes in the context within which asylum work is funded and carried out. There have been changes in asylum regulations, including the New Asylum Model (NAM), the legacy review which has led to a large number of



positive decisions, the end of funding streams such as ATLAS and the impact of A8 migration.

As a consequence of such changes, there is a need not only to reflect, but also to look forward and consider what adjustments will be beneficial. There have been different responses to this at different levels. Changing needs, and the adjustments made by some services, were discussed in Chapter 6. Plans have also been made at a more strategic level. From a Scottish Government perspective it was noted that changed circumstances are likely to lead to a shift in focus from finding meaningful activities for those who are waiting, to dealing with what happens once people receive an outcome (Interview: Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration, Scottish Government). In terms of funding there has been a move towards rationalisation. Funding will no longer be on a year on year basis, and there is a preference for a more partnership-based model to avoid some of the difficulties of competitive funding. There will instead be a three-year funding period with more emphasis on practical support, though not excluding shorter-term projects, and a desire to fund fewer projects with more money. It was noted that, in the past, risks had been taken, but in the future the Scottish Government would look to pull out of smaller projects, which might result in more partnership bids (Interview: Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration, Scottish Government). Another strategic body which is a major conduit for funding is Glasgow Community Planning, which handles the Integration Resources fund. Again, a more strategic model is planned to balance city-wide co-ordination and meeting local needs. The intention is to achieve this balance by formalising the role of the Integration Networks in Glasgow, which can perform both a co-ordinating and fund-holding role, while being responsive to local needs and acting on grassroots input. This offers the possibilities of dealing with the problem of duplication and taking a more proactive approach. Yet there are also difficulties as future policy changes could disrupt integration planning, and there are also issues in tackling racist attitudes and discrimination that continue to require city-wide action. As each network has developed independently, capacity will vary in different areas, and co-ordination and support will be required to ensure consistent levels of support across the city. Nonetheless, the move to formalise the role of networks is an extremely important shift in the integration landscape and

architecture in Glasgow, whose strengths and weaknesses are discussed further below.

### **7.1.2 *The Role of Networks***

Integration networks evolved in the different areas of the city housing asylum seekers, each operating differently, but with common aims including representation, service provision, and information and advice for both service providers and asylum seekers. They are a forum for service providers to meet and provide links between the different sectors involved, and in some cases facilitate the participation of asylum seekers and local residents. In order to understand the proposed changes in integration work, the development of the networks will be briefly reviewed, before discussing the new model planned by Glasgow Community Planning, the progress which has been made, and the challenges and the implications for integration work in Glasgow.

The development and role of integration networks in Glasgow was analysed by Wren (2004) and the following discussion is based on this study. In looking at the roles and activities of the ten resettlement and integration networks that were established in Glasgow between 2000 and 2002, it was pointed out that these had developed in a locally specific, piecemeal fashion, resulting in considerable variation in working practices and objectives, although with a common goal of integration. The typical structure (Wren, 2004: 26) involved elements of the following: a co-ordinator, a Social Inclusion Partnership (now Community Planning Partnership) representative, representatives from statutory agencies, representatives from voluntary organisations and community groups, representatives from local church drop-ins, local organisations, volunteers and asylum seekers. Multi-agency partnership was viewed as the basis of good practice in the provision of support for asylum seekers: a key aim of the networks was therefore to facilitate partnership working and the engagement of statutory agencies with the voluntary sector (which also helps to promote mainstreaming of asylum issues). Wren (2004: 25) suggests that most work exists on a continuum between information sharing and more integrated working arrangements involving service provision. As previously noted

with regards to asylum support, the early work of the networks was, in common with other forms of support, highly reactive to immediate needs. The establishment of the networks was, however, the start of a process of moving beyond a rapid response to urgent needs to looking at longer-term planning and formalising provision. The move towards strategic planning and reassessment of service provision has placed particular emphasis on the work of the networks and on formalising their role as a means of combining grassroots input and strategic oversight in the integration process. The formalisation of the work of the networks links with the channelling of resources through Glasgow Community Planning and moves towards mainstreaming asylum work. There are, however, challenges presented by the more formalised role of the networks.

The impetus behind a more formalised role for the integration networks has arisen both from a desire to ensure better co-ordination and responsiveness to local needs and from the need for a more effective use of the existing resources. As one interviewee commented:

*My sense is that there's probably about £5m coming into the city as a whole for refugee projects, and that excludes the enormous investment from the Home Office, into the dispersal arrangements and also excludes statutory agencies costs, core costs like policing and health and social work and so on. So that's just around that specific project type work with the £5m. I haven't done an analysis of every single penny, but my judgement is that not all that money's used very well. ... We could get a lot more by providing programmes of work rather than lots of different projects (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

The intention is to create a system that allows for effective local control and input, while also having co-ordinated programmes that will resolve some of the existing issues of duplication and lack of connection between projects. The aim is:

*A system which is based around allocating money to local integration networks... They're all at different stages of development, but very few are constituted. So they wanted – they and we want - to create a situation where local priorities determine how money's allocated. In order for that to happen, a couple of things needed to be in place. The networks have to be constituted and they have to work to a work plan. So there's some clear sense of purpose and also that these networks are safe places to park the money. They themselves determine what their priorities would be and we also made a condition upon this that they would check with local Framework for Dialogue<sup>20</sup> groups in order to get a sense that the service users ... actually want those services ... Networks have responded to that in different ways, one extreme is*

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<sup>20</sup> Framework for Dialogue groups were set up in dispersal areas of Glasgow to provide a forum for asylum seekers and refugees to influence local level policy development and service delivery.

*like its big brother coming along telling us how to do things, its all about top down control. And other networks liked it and are taking it forward and are really running with it. (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

The progressive nature of this approach to integration work, and the opportunities that it offers for a more inclusive planning process were highlighted:

*Essentially each separate integration network would be charged with drawing up a local integration plan ... and would look to resource that from integration resources and other places, and for the first time all investment in community integration would be channelled according to a strategic vision and a strategic plan. I say for the first time, I think this has been developing for the last five years, but it's been given a major fillip by this process and a formal recognition of this process and the agencies would be held accountable to the plan and very radically, refugees and asylum seekers would need to sign off on the plan so there's no way really that you can see that as anything other than a radical idea. It's not an offer that been given to lots of other top-down social planning approaches to regeneration issues, there's very few other groups have been offered that level of influence. (Community Development Co-ordinator Scottish Refugee Council)*

The formalisation of the role of the networks is viewed by some as a positive opportunity to cement community involvement, address some of the weaknesses that arose out of the reactive nature of the early provision and make more effective use of resources. Effective use of resources is particularly important given the changes in the funding environment noted above, and ongoing changes in the integration context, such as A8 migration, which bring fresh challenges. There are, however, also a number of stumbling blocks in the process that reflect time constraints, the capacity and will of the networks, and potential tensions in their dual role as fund holders and service providers. There are also concerns over the broader impact of the political process in light of the changed political context since the election of the SNP government in May 2007. Although the SNP has been very supportive of asylum work, more general shifts in funding structures and the channelling of resources may have an impact. The time constraints are also a particularly problematic factor:

*The negotiations are very balanced at the moment and the difficulty is its coming down to the folk who are involved on the ground saying we can only make agreements if they go over the March 2008 deadline and community planning are unable to think beyond that because of annuality, but also because of the spending review which has only guaranteed transitional money until June... So we're proposing there should be three pilots to explore the models, take the thinking a bit further, but what we don't want to do is sign up to a programme that can be delivered by March 2008.... So this*

*is the sticking point and it's a genuinely difficult one to resolve ... It's all at a very fine stage at the moment and one of the big problems as I say is there's impending publication of the race equality strategy and there's the strategic spending review (Community Development Co-ordinator Scottish Refugee Council)*

Within the broader funding context there are also implications for the balance between local and city-wide work, as indicated above, and between mainstream and specialist provision, as discussed further below.

### **7.1.3 Mainstream and Specialist Provision**

An important issue in understanding integration and moving towards a strategic approach is the balance between mainstream and specialist provision of support services for asylum seekers. This section considers what mainstreaming means, how it connects to understandings of integration, views on how it has worked in practice and some of the associated challenges.

In discussing service provision for asylum seekers Wren (2004: 21) highlights the Scottish Executive Equalities Strategy, which recognises that needs differ among different groups and aims to meet them within mainstream provision through sensitive service provision. MacKay and Bilton (2003: 17) define mainstreaming as the integration of equal opportunities principles and practice, usually on gender but also incorporating other dimensions of social exclusion, into the work of public and other bodies. They further note, however, that although there has been intense interest in the concept, there is also uncertainty as it is increasingly used, but less well understood. Mainstreaming is important, however, in terms of understanding integration as it can be seen as a goal of integration work. It is important to acknowledge the diversity of attitudes and the variation amongst different services. Wren (2004: 32) found that opinion on specialist services, in this instance for mental health provision, was divided for, although acute need was acknowledged, it was generally felt that asylum seekers should use the health services on the same basis as the wider population in order to avoid creating perceptions of preferential resource allocation. Health is an area where there was some difference of opinion over how far mainstreaming had proceeded, as although it was acknowledged that a large amount of work had been undertaken, there were

still felt to be areas of weakness. It was noted that there are perceived gaps in mainstream health services (such as mental health) for all people regardless of their background.

Enabling asylum seekers to access mainstream services is also an important goal for integration work and a frequent means of trying to evaluate integration. One participant felt that too much emphasis on special projects risked inhibiting integration:

*I'd say the mainstreaming agenda's been done kind of okay, one of the problems is that, not to be facetious about it, there's a risk that agencies that we fund hold onto asylum seekers and refugees far too long and keep them as asylum seekers and refugees and don't see them as people who are accessing rights, who have incredible talents for survival, incredibly resourced human beings ...even though when they get here they remain vulnerable and dependent ... its that the industry that I spoke about, about funded asylum projects, I'm not sure how effectively they have relationships with the statutory agencies. One of the things the networks should do ... is develop ...referral protocols where people can come to the system and get ... the more tender intimate support that special projects can provide, but quite quickly these projects should be recognising their limitations and getting people into the more mainstream arena (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

As the excerpt above indicates, mainstreaming requires effective relationships between the voluntary and statutory sectors in order to promote asylum seekers' access to mainstream services. Access to mainstream services is not always straightforward, not only due to demand but also cost and accessibility. Wren (2004: 35) found that in terms of cultural and leisure activities (which are important sites for social integration) access to mainstream services was largely dependent on local availability and cost. Difficulties in accessing such services may reflect a lack of facilities in the local area and problems of deprivation are therefore also pertinent.

The overall view among those interviewed was that progress on mainstreaming has been uneven, but that there were pockets of very good practice. Changes have been both in terms of awareness raising, with the role of the work funded by the ATLAS partnership important in this regard, as well as changes in service provision. The impact of the money from ATLAS for capacity building was noted from a further education perspective:

*We did a lot of work in the beginning, we got some funding under the first round of EQUAL ... so we ran a few, kind of, awareness raising sessions. Because in the beginning it was thorny, it was difficult, it's all that cross cultural stuff, **they** do this and*

*they do that... There are still issues; I think there are a lot of issues about language acquisition awareness. I suppose not understanding that just because somebody doesn't appear that fluent, that just by being in the class if they can cope with the level of work that will help them. But in the beginning there was very much, well we're not working with them, they don't speak English and that I'm happy to say has changed and we've got a good equalities policy and diversity policy in the college so it would be challenged if a teacher did behave in that way. (ESOL provider)*

Two areas that were cited as examples of good practice more than once were education and policing. In both cases it was the incorporation into daily work and practice that were highlighted:

*Now these schools are just totally comfortable with this concept [of working with asylum seeker children] it's just part and parcel of their school's life, and it's been really interesting for me to see how that change has happened and how its just become integrated into school life. Again it's that whole mainstreaming thing and not being complacent and saying that there's not things we could do better because there always are, but there's certainly been a huge amount of learning, a huge amount of progress taken place in that time. (Education Provider)*

A similar shift was noted in policing work:

*The police role in integrating asylum seekers at a strategic level is pretty much set now, the basics have been done and have moved on really far... So what's needed here now is to maintain that level of commitment from Strathclyde and to develop it with moving times. ... That's where we've reached now where we don't have to have somebody dedicated 100% to asylum matters and I think that's the way this will continue... Asylum's not the big issue it was when asylum seekers arrived here. It's very much a part of our lives here which is great. (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*

Areas such as education and policing lie at one end of a spectrum of approaches to supporting asylum seekers, where it has become incorporated into normal working practice, rather than being viewed as a separate issue. There is still variation among statutory services regarding progress with mainstreaming; one interviewee suggested, for example, that progress had been poor in the community health and care partnerships (Interview: Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning). There is a need for continued funding and ongoing service development and awareness raising work. The policy environment for asylum work remains difficult. Mainstreaming is not only a crucial factor in how services are funded, but is also linked to a number of different dimensions of integration. Facilitating access to mainstream services not only promotes integration, but also helps to counter negative attitudes by countering perceptions of favourable treatment. Mainstreaming asylum support not only brings

challenges that arise from asylum specific issues, but can also raise the problem of generic service inadequacies that can inhibit access to mainstream services. It therefore relates to a broader social inclusion and regeneration agenda. The formalisation of the role of the local integration networks, in connection with local community planning partnerships, aims to take a more strategic approach to these multi-faceted problems.

There are therefore a number of challenges relating to the move towards a more strategic approach to integration involving funding, the role of the networks and mainstreaming. These issues indicate the need to build on and develop existing work, although the context for asylum integration work continues to change. A further important factor in the reassessment of funding sources and service provision has been the shift in focus from asylum to wider migration issues brought about by A8 migration. The impact of this on the integration context for asylum seekers is now discussed further.

## **7.2 A8 MIGRATION**

EU enlargement has been an important factor, together with changes in asylum policy and legislation, in reshaping the integration context. A8 migration is an issue that emerged in several of the earlier stakeholder interviews and was then followed up in the remaining interviews where appropriate. Large scale migration from the A8 countries has led to a shift in immigration issues from asylum to migration more broadly. This shift is reflected in the restructuring of the strategic body convened by the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) from the Refugees and Asylum Seekers Consortium to the Strategic Migration Partnership (SMP) in 2007. This section considers the challenges that A8 migration has presented for integration work and service provision in Glasgow, discussing the background and available statistics, the implications for service provision and integration issues.

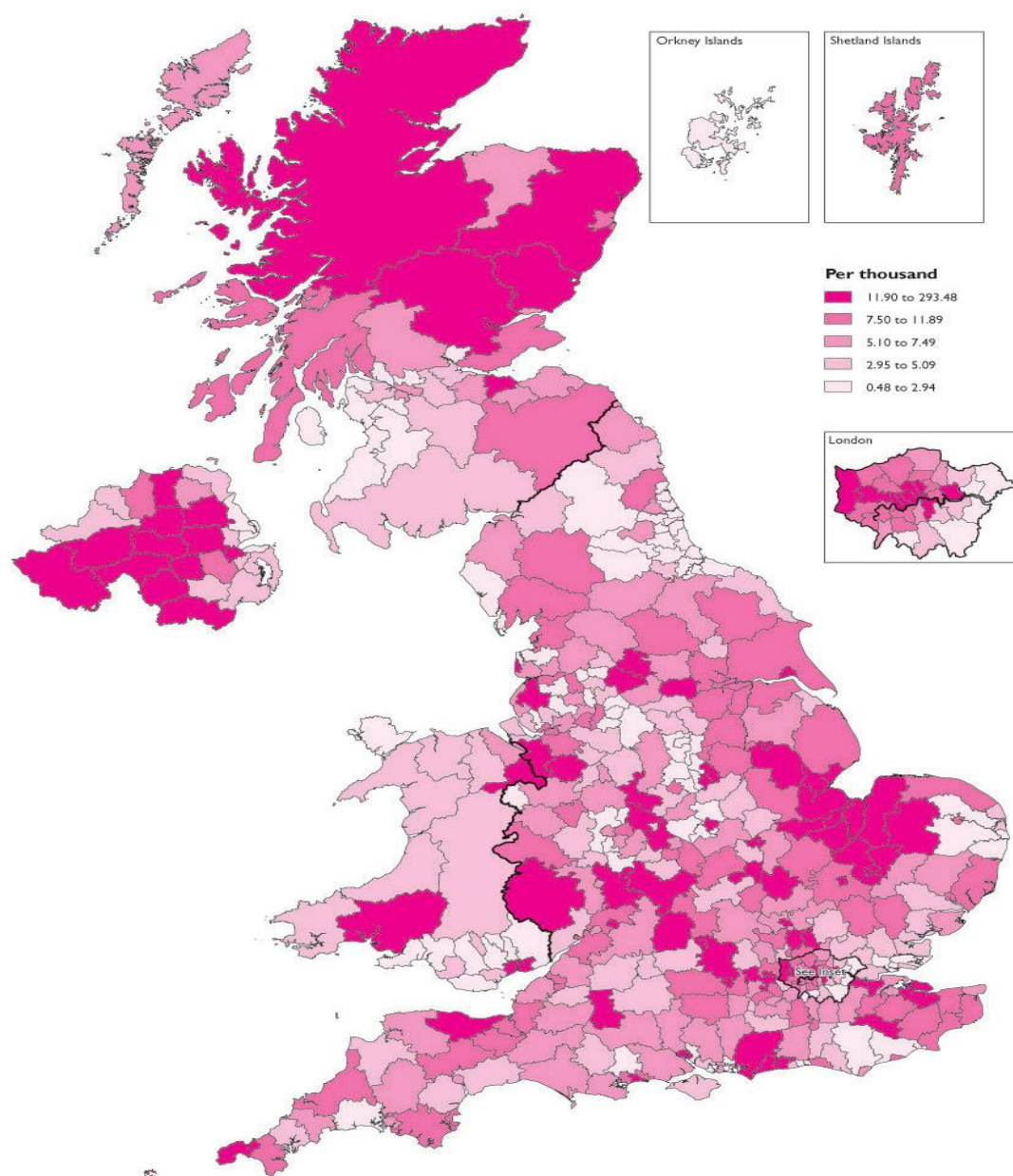


### **7.2.1 Context**

In order to contextualise the discussion of integration and service issues arising from A8 migration, and how these interact with support for asylum seekers, this section discusses the number of A8 migrants (bearing in mind the limitations of the available statistics), and presents some analyses of the impact of A8 migration, although these tend to focus on economic rather than social issues. The UK, along with Sweden and Ireland, was one of only three countries in 2004 to allow the new EU members unrestricted access to their labour markets. This has led to an estimated inflow of over 600,000 A8 workers to the UK since May 2004, far exceeding the pre-enlargement predictions of a net annual addition of only about 13,000 workers (Ruhs, 2007: 4). Ruhs (2007:4) notes, however, that despite the inaccuracy of the predictions of the numbers of migrant workers, the government has maintained that the impact has been beneficial by filling skills and labour gaps. Danson (2007:26) also found that reports indicated that migrants were reasonably well integrated into the workplace and the community, although there was a notable underutilisation of migrant labour.

The main source of information on the numbers, location and labour market participation of A8 nationals comes from the Worker Registration Scheme (WRS), which was put in place to regulate access to the labour market and access to benefits. The WRS data is analysed in the Accession Monitoring Report (2007) by the Borders and Immigration Agency and other government departments. According to these figures 715,000 initial applications to register on the WRS were approved between 1 May 2004 and 30 September 2007, and the majority of these were from Polish applicants. In Scotland there were 8,150 registrations from May-December 2004, 15,895 during 2005, 19,050 during 2006 and 15,040 in the first 3 quarters of 2007 (Borders and Immigration Agency et al., 2007: 18). These figures therefore suggest a cumulative total of 58,135 A8 workers registering in Scotland during the period May 2004 – September 2007, as compared to an asylum seeker population in Glasgow averaging around 5,000 during that period. Figure 2 below indicates the geographical distribution of A8 migrants across the UK.

**Figure 2: A8 Registered Citizens per Thousand Population, May 2004 to December 2006**



*Source:* Data from WRS presented in Bauere et al. (2007: 9)

Figure 2 illustrates that A8 migration is an issue that affects all of Scotland, by contrast to the more geographically limited impact of asylum in Glasgow, explaining the strategic shift in focus to broader issues of migration. Within Glasgow itself,

although the numbers of A8 migrants settling there have been lower than in some other parts of Scotland, A8 migrants have tended to settle in areas that did not previously house asylum seekers, largely reflecting the availability of housing.

There are, however, a number of recognised limitations to the WRS data. As Ruhs (2007:10) notes, there is significant debate over the extent to which the official registration data reflect the actual numbers. There are exemptions (those who are self employed are not required to register), not all those coming in will register, and furthermore there is no requirement to deregister. One outcome of the potential underestimates is that resources may not match actual requirements. Ruhs (2007: 20) notes that, due to concerns over demands on public services, the Local Government Association recently wrote to the Home Secretary suggesting that local councils do not get enough money to fund services because official figures underestimate actual levels. Within Glasgow it was noted that the Council also takes into account other indicators of the numbers of migrants who have come to the city:

*You've got people who've formally registered for work [and that] gives you one number, but you know that's an under-representation because people work illegally or haven't registered to the system yet. You also look at the school rolls and migrant workers, the number of children from A8 countries enrolling in Glasgow has increased, so government policy of bringing people in who are single, who are going to work and then go away again doesn't seem to be borne out by the reality. Then you look at demands for interpreting services and things and you tend to find out its Polish (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council)*

The numbers have therefore been greater than anticipated, and the wider geographical distribution has made migration an issue of broader concern. One interviewee (Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration, Scottish Government) noted that compared to asylum, A8 migration is the bigger story as it involves ten times as many people, who are spread out all over Scotland, and integration therefore involves a much wider group. The changes brought about by this new migrant flow have also influenced the move to a more strategic funding and integration strategy discussed above. During the interview with the COSLA SMP manager (June 2007), it was noted that with the focus of the money moving from asylum and refugees to broader migration, and the need to spread resources more widely, there is a responsibility to take stock and reflect on the implications. The implications for services and integration are now discussed.

### 7.2.2 Service Implications

A8 migration has a number of implications for service providers, including demand for services, availability of information, planning, resources and co-ordination of services. In several cases the issues raised interact with service provision for asylum seekers, with more demands for language services and for some local community groups, which has led to resources having to be spread more widely. Education is an area in which the changes can be seen quite strongly, with the impact on ESOL provision and the increase in bilingualism as an issue for schools. Shifting patterns in demand and provision have led to a reallocation of resources, and to resources having to meet a wider need.

One issue in dealing with the service implications is the co-ordination of information and services. As one interviewee (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning) commented, there is no Scottish Migrant Council in the way there is a Scottish Refugee Council that agencies can go to for advice and information. The problems with the available statistical information are discussed above, yet there is a need for accurate information to match services, resources and needs. One interviewee highlighted discussions that had been held around establishing a centre dealing with professional and educational qualifications:

*We formed this organisation called New Roots Scotland ... One of the things that we've been pursuing for a long time ... is to create ... a centre in Scotland, based at Glasgow Caledonian ... something like a centre for recognition. We wrote a paper as a group more than a year ago ... and the idea was anybody new to Scotland would come into this centre and they would get a skills assessment if you like, but they would also have their English language level tested. If they were, for example, a plumber, we would be trying to work out what reasonable courses there were in our colleges that could possibly fast track that plumber so that the plumber wouldn't have to begin ... right at the beginning if they're already qualified. Even if they're not carrying papers we would want some kind of assessment that a college could do to say yeah they're a bona fide plumber. At the moment these fast track courses don't exist so we figured that part of the centre's role would be to lobby to try to work with colleges. One of the issues at the moment is we don't know how many people we've got and we don't know who they are and we don't know what skills they've got. So the centre would collate that... (ESOL provider)*

That it had not yet been possible to move this project forward was, however, a source of disappointment. In addition to the broader issues of information and co-ordinating services there were also specific issues in certain local areas of Glasgow

(which are discussed further below), and in certain sectors. The impact was felt in different ways by different service providers; with police attention drawn to the issue of drink-driving:

*It's had a big impact for us, obviously ... its very early days for us with the A8 nationals, like every group of people we are experiencing some criminality, but the majority of them that we're coming across are very decent law-abiding citizens. Interesting that one of the things that a number of A8 nationals are coming to the attention of the police for is drink driving, I don't know if there isn't drink-drive legislation in some of the countries that they're coming from, but that seems to be the main thing that they're coming to the attention of the police for (Chief Inspector Strathclyde Police)*

From other perspectives it had raised issues over how to engage and communicate with new groups of people, particularly those who may be living in very poor standard accommodation and have different cultural expectations and norms, with the Slovakian Roma mentioned in this regard:

*If you see ... some of the conditions that people lived in, and [then] they come here you can understand for them why it seems such a good deal, albeit they're living in very poor accommodation that we think [is] overcrowded and unsanitary and we want to move them out of [it], but for them this is a big step forward and I think in those groups there's big cultural issues. They tend to come and it's a very short term transitory type existence, its difficult to look at how you get the children to school and keep them in school... There's a bit about education and there's a bit about involvement ... the whole issue in a sense is that there's not that many Slovakian Roma speakers in Glasgow... I think there's only three and we had to import two of them from Slovakia, so the whole issue, how do you engage someone who doesn't speak English. Fortunately we've got interpreters who can speak some of the other languages that they can speak and they can speak a whole range of different languages (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council)*

In some cases there have been demands for interpreting services which have been difficult to meet and have made the issue of engagement more difficult. The cultural issues indicated above are considered further when the implications for integration are discussed in more depth below. In terms of demands on services, however, as noted above, education, and particularly ESOL provision, has experienced particular changed patterns of demand and adjustment of services.

As discussed in Chapter 5, ESOL and English language acquisition is a key route to integration for asylum seekers, not only for the intrinsic value and necessity of the language, but from the additional benefits of the social contacts and sources of information promoted through the classes. Demand for classes is high, there are often

waiting lists and childcare can present a particular barrier. A8 migration has greatly increased the demand for ESOL provision, not just in Glasgow, but across Scotland, including some areas which did not have previous experience of providing an ESOL service. Consequently existing resources have to be stretched further and there is more demand on available funding. The impact of A8 migration on ESOL provision in Scotland has been reviewed for the Scottish Government. Beadle and Silverman (2007) found that the number of learners had increased from 14,500 in 2003-04, to over 19,000 in 2005/06 and that the greatest growth was in areas without large cities. They found increased demand from A8 nationals was significant in nearly all areas of Scotland with demand outweighing supply, although it had stimulated new provision. There were a number of difficulties, including recruitment and retention of qualified teachers, and for voluntary providers, a need to achieve a balance between courses targeting migrant groups and those targeting the indigenous population. Despite additional resources from the Scottish Government, Beadle and Silverman (2007:48) found funding remained a major concern, with less than half of providers satisfied with their level of funding and most concerned that funding was insufficient to provide the volume of courses needed, and with concerns over future funding. It is also possible that within the overall need to learn and improve English there may be different needs among A8 migrants and asylum seekers. Beadle and Silverman (2007:56) suggest that generally A8 migrants focused more on progressing in employment as the main reason for studying ESOL, whereas asylum seekers and settled migrants also expressed the importance of settling into their life in Scotland. One response within Glasgow has been to take a more quota-based approach, by taking a decision to split classes two-thirds asylum seekers and refugees to one-third migrant workers. The feeling was also that the extra funding, as it was of a general nature, would probably not go very far:

*I don't know how that will translate in terms of actual classes. My feeling is it won't, there'll be very little because if it's spread amongst all the colleges, and they will have to do something with the rural colleges because they're getting the migrant worker issue, I think it will be little per college, it might allow us to run one other class. (ESOL provider)*

ESOL provision is therefore an area in which the impact of A8 migration has been strongly felt. The impact has also been felt in other areas of education. It was noted

previously that asylum has become an issue for all schools in Glasgow, rather than just a few as was initially the case. With the additional numbers of children of migrant workers, bilingualism has become a key issue for schools to deal with:

*Within Scotland it's not an asylum issue it's more of a migrant worker issue, but there is a way in which bilingualism is becoming a bigger issue in education and ... issues around bilingualism, how you support bi-lingual children and related issues to do with translation and interpreting. There's a lot of people talking about these things all over Scotland and I think in Glasgow we've got a lot to contribute to that debate, we've got a lot of experience ... The Scottish Executive education department are [interested] - what is national policy on supporting bilingual learners? How do we take this forward? Because they're getting local authorities from all over the place shouting at them saying we need more money so they're trying to get some kind of strategic coherent view on it. (Education Provider)*

Services have therefore had to respond to an increased demand for services, which has led to resources having to go further, but there has also been an opportunity in some areas to contribute the expertise that has been built up from asylum work. This contrasts positively with the experiences at the beginning of the dispersal; Kelly (2002: 9) argues that support teams had been unable to sustain any momentum from the Kosovo programme in the core services of interpreting, legal advice, English language training, health, education and social work facilities. The implications for integration are now discussed further.

### **7.2.3 Integration Issues**

The arrival of migrant workers has added another strand to integration work in Glasgow. There are clearly important differences between A8 migrants and asylum seekers. A8 migrants have the right to live and work in the UK and therefore do not face many of the challenges or barriers that asylum seekers encounter. On the whole the arrival of A8 migrants is viewed as largely positive, but there are some groups who are seen to require more support. Glasgow City Council conducted research into the migration of A8 nationals prompted by difficulties in one particular area of the city. They found, however, that the problems were not widely replicated, and that the experiences and effect of migration from the EU were generally positive (COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership, 2007). The difficulties that have been encountered,

are, however, considered, together with resources and the broader implications for integration.

Within a generally positive picture there have been some difficulties that have emerged as a result of A8 migration, as one interviewee commented:

*A8 migration [has had] a massive effect on this issue [integration] in this part of this city... There have been problems ... and some of that stuff relates to kind of cultural norms and standards, some of it relates to how Slovakian Romas have got here. They have been trafficked or have been assisted to get here by gang masters, they've come in for specific types of work. The evidence suggests that the houses are very overcrowded ... dangerously overcrowded. They're private sector tenants so the housing inspection stuff is a lot weaker there, and there are a number of other cultural problems about how Slovaks are conducting themselves in the streets and about how people are responding to that... The other problem was that integration resources were specifically for asylum seekers and couldn't be used for A8 migrants. (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

There are not only some emerging cultural issues, but also questions around finding the resources to fit in this strand of work, in addition to the asylum integration work. As indicated above, the Integration Resources which fund asylum work through the Community Planning Partnerships are specifically for asylum related work. It is difficult for smaller community groups, however, to turn away people who may come looking for assistance. One way of dealing with this is to consider the integration of asylum seekers within a broader context of multicultural work:

*Any work you do to promote the integration of an asylum seeker in Govanhill, would be about integrating with Slovakian Romas or Polish people or with people from Pakistan or India so you can still help these communities more widely, you can have really much more of a multicultural bit. What I think should happen though is that the models for integration for asylum and for refugees are very helpful in considering models for integration for Slovakian Roma and for all A8 migrants, some other migrant communities are less needy of support but there's a big need for support with the Slovakian Romas.(Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

One response to cross-cultural difficulties has been to focus not only on providing information about services but also on expectations:

*It's about engagement, It's about starting to build a relationship, without diminishing their cultural identity, but also saying if you're staying in Glasgow the host city has certain expectations as well and you can't settle feuds amongst yourself, the police should be involved, you can't drink drive, ... Things like schooling and children, health, they're used to a very poor national health service, in the UK we've got expectations that people will engage with the health service... And some of these are all cultural and they create tension [that] you have to try and work through, take the*



*long term view, information, education, allowing people to make their own choices and then living with the consequences. (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council)*

An issue for integration therefore, is to find resources for working with new groups, and dealing with any emerging cultural issues and the implications for how integration is understood. The existing work with asylum seekers is thought to form a good base for work with A8 nationals although the issues are not identical:

*In some ways it's quite good that we've been through the asylum seeker experience before the A8 migrants arrived, because we wouldn't have had the same opportunities with them. We don't know how many A8 nationals are here, we don't know where they all are... There doesn't actually seem to be the same need for community groups to be set up for A8 nationals, there are one or two, particularly Polish, who seem to meet in church environments so there's a couple of groups there and there's a couple of other shop premises that are run by other A8 nationals that people from the same country seem to migrate towards, which is good. We have good links with the different consuls, which is helping us a lot. (Chief Inspector Strathclyde Police)*

There are still issues that remain to be resolved in understanding integration in light of these new pressures and changes. One interviewee (ATLAS: May 2007) noted that there is confusion in the public perceptions surrounding A8 migrants. There is a continued need for awareness-raising work about the distinctive circumstances and rights of asylum seekers (as well the restrictions of their status) in relation to other migrant groups. There is also a need for more information on A8 nationals, particularly regarding the length of stay, although this is difficult to measure as intentions before arrival often differ from outcomes. As Ruhs (2007:23) argues, duration of stay raises important questions for the UK's integration policies as the issues are different for those who settle permanently than for those coming for a short period. These differences have already had to be confronted in Scotland in the context of integration for asylum seekers who have only temporary status, and whatever the circumstances of departure, promoting integration for those who may not remain long is not straightforward. Yet as Ruhs (2007: 23) notes, so far East European migrants have been almost entirely missing from the integration debates in the UK. Although this work focuses on integration for asylum seekers, integration is very context specific and must therefore take account of changes such as the impact of A8 migration

Whilst A8 migration was viewed as being positive overall, it clearly raises new challenges in conceptualising and resourcing integration. The difficulties in conceptualising integration, and the work in Scotland, are discussed further in Chapter 8, following a consideration of strengths and weaknesses in support for asylum seekers.

## **7.3 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

An important aspect of the challenges involved in dispersal and integration is recognising the strengths and weaknesses of the response so far. The need for reflection and reassessment was highlighted above when discussing moving towards a more strategic approach to integration. Part of this move involves taking into account strengths and weakness in both asylum specific services, and in mainstream provision. A number of issues were highlighted in interviews, including partnership working, the differences in the Scottish working environment, the role of communities, childcare, and access to legal services.

### **7.3.1 Strengths**

Earlier chapters discussed the progress that has been made in Glasgow since dispersal began, with a number of initial problems having been overcome and the model for integration regarded as fairly successful within the difficult context of asylum policy. The strengths highlighted by different interviewees reflect their different perspectives arising from different roles in the integration and dispersal process. Issues noted as strengths included partnership working, the role of communities including the asylum seeking community and the different working environment in Scotland, including a more supportive media.

The importance of partnership and multi-agency work has been highlighted in previous research on responses to asylum in Scotland (Barclay et al., 2003, Wren, 2004). It is interesting to note that, despite the difficulties that several agencies noted

in working with the Home Office and the problems created by Home Office policies, partnership working was also seen as a strength from their perspective:

*When I took this job that's one of the first things I did, I insisted I shadowed my stakeholders, so I spent a week in the SRC, I worked with GASSP, YMCA. The only one I've not done so far because they're so new is Angel, but because I don't work with NAM I'm not really working with Angel that much. But from that then we forged links and when we do meet we all know where we're all coming from. We are critical friends at the same table. (Regional Manager, BIA Scotland)*

The developments in the relationship with the Home Office were acknowledged by some stakeholders, in addition to the frustrations discussed in Chapter 4:

*Again, I think in Scotland we're quite fortunate there's a very good working relationship between the Home Office and all the stakeholders and people like COSLA who, as an umbrella group, have brought together lot of people, and I think there's a lot of good joint working going on which has helped a lot. Because certainly when I started this job, there certainly wasn't that kind of level of co-operation from the Home Office ... Decisions were made in Croydon and we were left to get on with it, whereas now we've got regionalisation, new regional director, much much better working relationships. (Education Provider)*

Despite these improvements there were also a number of weaknesses in support for asylum seekers arising from asylum policy, as discussed further below. Partnership working was not only with the Home Office, however, but also between the different agencies in Glasgow, both informally, such as relationships between different churches, and through the formal network convened by COSLA. These relationships were seen as a clear advantage in asylum work:

*Without doubt the strengths are the partnership working of the agencies that are involved with [asylum seekers]. Another strength is the profile of the asylum seeking individuals that we have here, they want to be part of Scottish society (Chief Inspector Strathclyde Police)*

The resources within the asylum seeking community itself were also seen as a strength in integration work, particularly from a community development perspective, as the hard work and effort from asylum seeking and refugee communities was acknowledged along with that of the host community. It is possible that one factor in this was that Glasgow had previously received mainly families, although the balance is shifting under the new contract. The larger number of

families is, however, one of the factors that contributed towards a different working environment in Scotland. Aspects viewed as different in Scotland were the distinctive approach to integration, as discussed in earlier chapters, the joint working by different groups and agencies, and more positive media coverage. These were factors that both enabled and contributed to the progress that had been achieved:

*I think we've come a long way. By we, again I mean the work that we've done here, but also the partners, the communities themselves, other partner agencies, have come a long way in creating a really positive discourse. If you look at the Scottish Refugee Integration Forum and its action plan, there's virtually nothing in that that you could disagree with, you might have liked it to go a bit further. They articulate the Scottish voice around dawn raids, the changes that have taken place as a result of that, the stabilisation of the population, and although there is pressure on services there's not a panic about lots of people looking for houses in Glasgow, these are all strengths. (Community Development Co-ordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

Another summarised the strengths as:

*I think first of all, as I touched on, there's a history and culture of welcoming, and people generally do come together and support each other... I think also there is a good network within schools and education about support for people with either educational needs or language needs built up over a period of time which I think is fairly crucial... I think in Glasgow we have a base of asylum communities which is good because they help to support each other. One of things that always impressed me is that amongst the asylum seekers there's lots of networks that are informal networks that help support each other ... I think that's some of the pros. I think also Glasgow's a city that can absorb new work (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council)*

Therefore there are a number of strengths, not only those highlighted above, but also the work done in policing and education, and by communities that has been discussed in previous chapters. Yet it is also recognised that there is still work to be done and a number of weaknesses remain. Despite the positive emphasis on partnership working there were still concerns over duplication and a lack of 'joined-upness'. Therefore what some highlighted as a positive factor is also, if not a weakness, an aspect that still needs improving. Weaknesses within the work in Glasgow, and areas of concern are now discussed further.

### 7.3.2 Weaknesses

In addition to the strengths discussed above, there were also areas identified as weaknesses by previous research and by some (though not all) participants. Some of these problems, such as destitution (see Section 6.3.1) and childcare (see Chapter 6), have been discussed earlier. The moves to eliminate duplication and better co-ordinate services through the enhanced role of the networks were discussed above. Other issues concerned, access to legal services, pre-5 provision as a specific issue within childcare, coping with extra demands on services as a result of the legacy case review, long-term outcomes, and support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC).

The difficulties around provision of pre-school nursery places illustrate that difficulties can arise not only due to a lack of resources, but also due to how those resources are allocated, and the difficulties of matching demand with availability of services:

*To be able to put a lot more support into that area would have benefits down the years. But we're not able to do that at the moment. It's partly funding, its partly ... the places that they are is not necessarily the places that you need them. So there's parts of the city, up in Red Road for example there's only one nursery in that area. ... And there are, if you were able to put people on a bus ... and take them out to Easterhouse for example, there would be thousands of places, there's absolutely tons of room there, but we don't have the resources to transport people and it's not necessarily the best thing either. So it's sometimes about lack of resources, but sometimes about the resources not being in the right place and it being difficult to move them around. (Education Provider)*

The difficulties of finding a nursery place were frequently observed during the participant observation in drop-ins. Asylum-seeking women had found that places were only available during the immediate pre-school year. The problems were not restricted to asylum seekers; local women also faced difficulties when the nursery had to change the hours available to individuals due to the high demand. This is a case therefore, of generic inadequacies in a mainstream service. It is also an existing problem intensified in a new context as asylum seekers are unlikely to have family or other networks of support to assist in childcare.

Another problematic aspect suggested was access to legal services. This was also noted earlier in Chapter 6 as a concern that had been raised by the Refugee

Women's Strategy Group. Although the legal aspects of the asylum process were not explored during this research it is worth noting that access to legal services was raised as a concern. As one interviewee commented:

*Some of the issues for me would be legal weaknesses, one because of the system, the system is horrendously stacked against the applicant and number two because I perceive there to be weaknesses in the quality...and communication of legal providers in Glasgow. They don't talk enough together, they don't share information an awful lot. [It's] not well resourced, not a very lucrative area of work for lawyers ... We lose a lot of good talented lawyers. So the legal scenario is poor, very very poor. (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

An issue that is more closely related to the focus on integration is concern over extra demand on services as a result of the large numbers of positive decisions received during the initial stages of the legacy case review. Although this was seen more as an immediate issue, rather than an ongoing long-term problem, it has important implications for future refugee integration as discussed in Section 6.3. As one interviewee (Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration, Scottish Government) commented, the legacy review is a very positive development, and they wouldn't want it to become negative because the system couldn't cope. A related concern is the difficulty of long-term tracking of outcomes after people receive a positive decision. There is very little statistical information available for those with refugee status mainly due to data protection and race equality issues.

Another issue of concern to several, including police, social work and education was the question of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC), who are not cared for by NASS, but under social work services. UASC are outwith the scope of this research, but unaccompanied children were noted as a significant concern. At the time of the interviews, the future direction of policy was still unclear and this was a source of worry:

*From a wider perspective with asylum seekers the biggest weakness that we have is how we deal with the UASC without the Home Office decision having been made as how they're going to take that whole project forward. We're not supplying the support to the UASC that we should be ... given the opportunity for criminals to target these youngsters for the purposes of human trafficking, which again we don't know an awful lot about meaning that we can't really assist ... so I would say that's our biggest weakness. (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*

In addition to the potential for exploitation there were also concerns over the treatment of these children by the asylum system:

*I think unaccompanied asylum seekers tend to be the forgotten end of asylum. What concerns me in a sense is that somehow, I think that government policy expects that they can be cared for by the local authority until they're 18 and then at 18 somehow they'll be put back into the adult system and then they'll be dealt with as new migrants. For me the reality is that if you care for somebody in terms of the corporate parenting that the local authority has to do, you're about integrating them into the community, you're about supporting them.... I just feel sorry for them that they get supported and integrated and assisted and then all of a sudden they're upturned in a very big pot where they're a very small section of that big pot.... So I just think we need to have a better joined up policy with young unaccompanied asylum seekers. (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council)*

The issues noted above, access to legal services, childcare, dealing with positive decisions, and those discussed elsewhere such as destitution and effective use of resources are specific issues within a very challenging policy environment. The major weakness for many was the policy discourse and the frequent changes which often inhibited integration work and support for asylum seekers and created problems for services in dealing with the asylum process.

### **7.3.3 Looking forward...**

Part of the purpose of reflecting on strengths and weaknesses, and considering the progress which has been made since dispersal started, is to look forward and consider not only how to improve current services and structures, but how to meet future challenges. Part of looking forward involves dealing with the new landscape for integration in Glasgow, with the impact of the new accommodation contract, the legacy review and the NAM. Provision and management of information is an issue that requires continued attention and investment. There is a need to maintain current levels of services and deal with new challenges. There is still work to be done, but there are also always unknown factors.

Acquiring and circulating accurate information is a key issue underlying many of the concerns around changes in the integration landscape. Service providers require information on their target populations and asylum seekers require

information on how to access services. It is also important to continue to counter negative attitudes and misperceptions around asylum. There are challenges of continuing to communicate information on services and community development to newly arriving asylum seekers under the new model, who are more spread out than previously. Service providers will have to adapt and respond to the faster turnaround times and throughput of people under the NAM and possibly refocus some of their services. There is also a question of the timing of when people get information; one community worker (Community Group Co-ordinator, Balornock) noted that often when people first receive information they are unable to take it all in. Having longer term settled communities also raises fresh challenges:

*I suppose an unpredictable factor is if we do have longer term stable communities in Glasgow, how do we avoid ghettoisation...how do we ensure that the natural attraction of people, because some of that goes on as well, folk come up to Glasgow because they know there's a Cameroonian community or a Somali community, how do we respond to the needs of those communities where there's a need for information and we have very little information available about who's coming and why. (Community Development Co-ordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

It was also suggested that, in some instances, honest appraisal may be more important than information provision:

*There's a lot of duplication, whether information and communication will sort that out I don't know. There's a need to appraise honestly what services and resources are needed in addition to existing statutory services. (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

When asked to consider how they thought their work would develop in the future, a number of issues were highlighted by the various stakeholders. Continuing uncertainty was noted:

*I think one of the interesting things about this job is that there will always be things happening, there's always new things come up and new challenges and new issues. At the moment removals is probably one of our big issues, trying to come up with some way of dealing with that. I suspect for the next year or so that probably is going to be a big issue, maybe for longer than that. But one of the interesting things is you just never know, there's always something new getting thrown up. (Education Provider)*

Several of the issues raised by interviewees relate to factors that have previously been discussed, such as the impact of policy changes. As a result of the legacy



review, and the potentially vastly speeded up decision making times as a result of the NAM, there is likely to be a corresponding shift in integration work towards dealing with the outcomes of the asylum process, supporting those who have received positive decisions, rather than dealing with the period while waiting for a decision and finding meaningful activities. Those in strategic roles also emphasised that asylum is now only one aspect of migration and cohesion work. From the perspective of the COSLA SMP (Interview: July 2007), the future will be different as every council is now touched by immigration, and looking for advice and guidance on community cohesion. The map of Glasgow has also changed with asylum seekers in more areas due to the new asylum contract and A8 migrants living in areas that have not been used for housing asylum seekers. The challenge therefore will be to continue to find a role for asylum work, and its distinctive aspects and characteristics, within the broader migration context with all the challenges that this brings for funding, co-ordination of resources and defining and promoting integration.

## **CONCLUSION**

Within a difficult policy environment there are some specific issues that present new challenges arising from policy changes, reflections on the responses to dispersal, and changes in context with the arrival of large numbers of A8 migrants. This chapter has looked at the challenges of the move towards a more strategic approach to integration, moving from a project to a programme funding basis, considering how funding affects integration work, and the enhanced role of the integration networks. Giving the networks a formal role and position within the funding process is intended to balance strategic vision and local input. Part of this shift involves trying to address some of the strengths and weaknesses that have been identified by assessing integration work and support for asylum seekers. There are issues with service delivery for asylum seekers, such as duplication of projects and lack of communication, but there are also weaknesses in existing services such as childcare provision. Many problems identified in supporting asylum seekers are not new issues, reflecting instead existing problems within the voluntary or statutory sectors

which take on a greater intensity within the context of asylum policy and the difficulties that it presents for individuals and service providers. Reconfiguring the networks will not be sufficient to overcome these generic service insufficiencies and co-ordinating integration work will remain difficult if policy continues to shift. A8 migration also presents challenges for service delivery and integration work. While the overall impact of A8 migration is seen as broadly positive, there has been increased demand for certain services, particularly ESOL provision, and the greater needs of certain groups suggests a need for a multicultural approach to integration. One key impact has been the shift away from a focus on asylum, to broader migration issues. Responding to this shift, and its impacts on funding and integration work, is a key challenge for the future. These particular challenges form part of the background for evaluating integration in the Scottish context.

## **8. EVALUATING INTEGRATION IN THE SCOTTISH CONTEXT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The difficult nature of integration, in both conceptual and practical terms, has been emphasised throughout this thesis. This chapter returns to issues that have been raised previously, such as some problems with available indicators, the temporary status of asylum seekers, and the complexity of facilitating integration. Both empirical and theoretical perspectives are used to provide an evaluation of integration in the Scottish context. The chapter therefore returns to the analytic theme of defining and promoting integration, and also deals directly with the third research question: in what ways is integration a problematic concept and how has this been addressed in Glasgow? The theoretical basis comes from two sources: the conceptual and empirical literature on integration, and the social capital literature. The chapter contains three different sections that deal with the problems of integration in a temporary context, the social capital framework, and a review of the Glasgow model for integration.

The temporary status of asylum seekers presents a number of challenges for integration which are discussed first, taking into account their implications for definitions, practice and indicators. Temporary status presents a paradox for integration, as removal always remains a possible outcome, and asylum policy places a number of restrictions on potential activities and indicators of integration. Policy and practice around integration have frequently drawn on ideas derived from social capital - the benefits which arise from participation in groups and social networks. Particular use has been made of the notion of building bridges, bonds and links. The discussion of social capital therefore moves on from the general discussion of social capital in the literature review to a more focused analysis of specific aspects which have been highlighted in integration work. These components of social capital and their application to integration are discussed, and the overall advantages and disadvantages of the social capital framework considered. Finally, the approach to

integration in Glasgow is reviewed, giving consideration to what has been done and how successful it has been, questioning whether a model for integration work could be derived from the approach taken in Glasgow, and considering the implications for policy and practice. The interaction with the national policy framework in setting the parameters within which integration takes place is also noted. This final empirical chapter links the issues raised in the empirical analysis regarding integration and the impact of policy back to conceptual debates around integration and social capital, and provides an overall analysis of integration in the Scottish context.

## **8.1 INTEGRATION IN A TEMPORARY CONTEXT**

Integration is a contested concept, with no single generally accepted definition. Yet as Ager et al. (2002: 3) note, integration is a policy goal with intended targets and outcomes, and some kind of operational understanding is therefore required. Further challenges are presented, however, when considering integration for asylum seekers, as not all of those who are the focus of integration work will be given leave to remain. Initial experiences on arrival are important in starting the integration process and impact on later integration outcomes. Delaying integration support may have a long-term inhibitory effect on subsequent settlement efforts. The impact of the temporary context is discussed with regard to definitions, practice and indicators, linking each to the problem of promoting integration prior to the granting of status, and the broader conceptual issues.

### ***8.1.1 Conceptualising Integration in a Temporary Context***

Integration in a temporary context by definition involves integrating those who may later choose, or be forced to leave. This section considers the issues raised by the integration of asylum seekers for understandings and frameworks for integration. The terminology itself is problematic: Korac (2003: 52) suggests that the range of terms used to describe the process of participation in new societies - absorb, assimilate,

incorporate, integrate - indicate that it is an ambiguous, complex and contested term. Zetter et al. (2002: 131) argue, however, that although the concept is contested, it is not chaotic as different integration typologies, although differing in detail and emphasis, frequently use similar terms. These typologies give different weight to the relative role of state structures, and to the individual (or group) strategies or agency of the migrant. Yet there are questions as to the relevance of the concept of integration for asylum seekers. Its application in this context requires a further refining of the concept from the broader framework of the integration of migrants, which is already narrowed for the integration of refugees, who are distinguished by the circumstances of their departure, to asylum seekers, who are further distinguished by their uncertain status. This section considers some common themes in the integration literature and addresses these themes in terms of asylum seeker integration and their applicability within a temporary context.

As argued in Chapter 5, integration is a multi-faceted concept with a number of different elements. It is commonly seen as a two-way process of adaptation, from the migrant and from the host society, in contrast to the emphasis which the concept of assimilation places on adaptation on the part of the migrant. The European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) (2005: 14) defines refugee integration as a dynamic, two-way, long-term multi-dimensional process. It places demands on receiving communities and individuals, and relates to conditions for, and actual participation in, all aspects of the economic, social, cultural, civil and political life of the country of the host society, as well as to refugees' own perceptions of acceptance by and membership in that society. The ECRE definition covers many dimensions in other definitions of integration (e.g., Spencer, 2006, Mestheneos and Ioannidi, 2002), although Griffiths et al. (2005: 200) note that a more instrumental approach tends to predominate in the policy field. Ager et al. (2002: 23) carried out a conceptual analysis of indicators of refugee integration and suggest as a working definition that an individual is integrated within society when they:

- are in an active relationship with members of their ethnic or national community, wider host communities and relevant services and functions of the state;

- achieve public outcomes within employment, housing, education, health etc. which are equivalent to those achieved within the wider host communities;
- and in a manner consistent with shared notions of nationhood and citizenship in that society

Integration is therefore not only multi-dimensional, but tends to have distinct strands of public outcomes (such as education and housing) on the one hand, and social connections and participation on the other. It is contextual and to a large degree subjective and the extent to which definitions of refugee integration apply to asylum seekers depends on particular national policy frameworks and the rights and restrictions associated with asylum seeker status. There are clear limitations within the UK context regarding housing, employment and education, and although the Scottish approach has been to promote integration from the day of arrival, integration remains constrained by the parameters of the asylum regime. Almost by definition therefore, asylum seeker integration can only be ‘lop-sided’ focusing more on the aspects relating to social connections and participation, than on public outcomes that are not yet attainable.<sup>21</sup> This channelling into certain aspects has implications for the types of indicators that are available, as social relations are subjective and difficult to measure. It is therefore clear why linking social capital to integration, and highlighting the building of bridges, bonds and links, has become prominent. A conceptualisation of asylum seeker integration focusing on the social aspects could be seen as providing a foundation for future integration. However, it raises questions about the risks of partial integration which may be difficult to build on once status has been granted, with the possibility of ongoing marginalisation. The concept of ‘segmented assimilation’<sup>22</sup> was introduced by Portes and Zhou (1993) to highlight the fact that integration may occur into a particular sector or niche, rather than into mainstream society. Countering isolation and hostility, and promoting access to services through the building of relationships is crucially important both in itself, and

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<sup>21</sup> The discussion refers to the circumstances of adult asylum seekers; the circumstances of children are different for a number of reasons including access to education.

<sup>22</sup> Assimilation is used here rather than integration, reflecting different usage of terminology within the American context.

as a means of facilitating other aspects of integration once leave to remain has been granted. But there are potential difficulties in building on initial forms of integration, as gaining leave to remain involves dealing with many new processes, such as accessing housing and employment. These problems are discussed further below, and also relate to the different bridging and bonding forms of social capital.

One potential source of confusion in conceptualisations of integration is that the term represents both a process and an outcome. This has implications for the forms and duration of support that are provided and for how outcomes can be measured. The process/outcome duality is also particularly helpful when considering integration within a temporary context and what it is possible to achieve in these circumstances. When the outcome of an asylum application, and thus the possibilities for fuller integration are uncertain, the focus must necessarily be on the process and on initiating actions to help support integration. It is possible to think in terms of a process/outcome continuum, and then in terms of where asylum seekers can fit into this process. For example, one possible representation may be:

*Arrival → Support → Empowerment → Mainstreaming → Integration →*

In this conceptualisation, integration for asylum seekers is relevant from the point of arrival where support is needed to adjust to new circumstances, cope with the legal process and access important services. Relationship building forms an important part of this support. Empowerment refers to the promotion of integration which may be less paternalistic than initial support and draws on the resources of individual asylum seekers and the wider community. Mainstreaming refers to moving beyond targeted support and services, which may happen before or at the point of decision. Integration in the wider sense begins when public outcomes such as housing, employment and education are no longer restricted, and is an ongoing process. The drawback of the representation above is its linear form, which is misleading as different forms of support may be required at different points for each individual. These issues are considered further when processes and outcomes are discussed below, after looking first at practical approaches to the dilemmas posed by temporary integration.

### **8.1.2 The Integration Paradox**

Dealing with integration in a temporary context, is not only a conceptual issue, but has vital implications for how best to support those awaiting decisions and for how to use resources most effectively. The decision taken by Glasgow City Council and the Scottish Government to support the integration of asylum seekers from the day of arrival is an important step in supporting a disadvantaged group and in building new communities but, given the difficult circumstances of asylum seekers and the inevitable removals of some, it is not a straightforward process. This section considers the practical approaches taken, the importance of openness in relation to the asylum process and integration work, and the issue of awareness and preparation for both possible outcomes to the asylum application.

The practical approach to supporting integration for asylum seekers in Glasgow could perhaps be characterised as ‘do what you can – while you can’ in terms of both responding to immediate needs, and planning for a more strategic approach in the longer-term. The various ways in which integration has been promoted were discussed in Chapter 5 and include drop-in and informal community groups providing humanitarian support, language help and befriending; English language provision; work by the police and schools; the building of networks to support communities and link into the policy process; as well as a wide array of small-scale projects such as peer advocacy and arts projects, and the activities of the asylum-seeking community itself. Supporting integration from the point of arrival helps build better community relations, aids in further integration efforts in case of permanent settlement, and helps to counteract the limbo and isolation that people can face while awaiting a decision. However, integration work within a temporary context requires difficult balances as there is a need for awareness that not everyone concerned will remain, not only within the city, but in the country.

One way of dealing with this paradox of integration for those with temporary status is to try and ensure a clear understanding of the asylum process itself:

*It is very difficult. I think openness and honesty on the part of the immigration service is going to go a long way. I think there's a number of measures that are starting to be put into place now that will help the short-term integration policy. (Chief Inspector, Strathclyde Police)*



A clear understanding of how the asylum process works, and who has decision-making power is also important to avoid raising false expectations regarding involvement in integration initiatives. One asylum seeker interviewed (A, Iraqi asylum seeker) noted that, during the initial meetings to set up settlement and integration networks with local officials, nearly all of those who attended were asylum seekers, rather than refugees. As discussed in Section 5.1.3, he suggested that many people thought that this involvement would help them to get status as they did not understand who had authority over their case; however, they gradually found out that this involvement did not have an influence.

Brekke (2004: 8) argues that it is in the interests of government that those who are going to stay will start orientating themselves towards the labour market as soon as possible. Those who are rejected, however, will be most successful on their return if they have used the waiting period to prepare for this possibility. But as Brekke (2004: 8) notes, it is unclear how reception policy should be formulated to simultaneously prepare individuals for integration and repatriation. There is return assistance available in the UK for unsuccessful asylum applicants, or those who choose to withdraw their application, but it was noted during one interview (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council) that there has been lower take up of the return and reintegration package in Scotland. It is possible that this may be due to the higher number of families, who have formed more connections in the community, for example through schools, but also because many will have continued to receive support after their asylum application is refused. It is possible that this may change with faster decision times under the New Asylum Model (NAM) as people will have had less time to feel settled. The difficulties involved in providing repatriation advice and information in addition to other services were noted by one service provider:

*What we're not doing, although we did discuss it, is we're not doing anything much on planning for repatriation and I don't really think that we've got the expertise to do that frankly... I think you really need a good idea of what the situation is like in the country of origin, how on earth have we got time to even begin to... (ESOL provider)*

Amongst those asylum seekers who participated in the research, there was a constant awareness of the possibility of refusal, which impacted on day-to-day activities.

Removals of families within the community were a striking reminder of the insecurity of status. The faster decision-making times under the NAM may ease the process, but temporary integration will still be challenging. The difficulties of promoting integration for those with temporary status are not easily resolvable, and the question of how integration can be evaluated and what indicators might be available, is made more difficult by the restrictions of asylum status.

### ***8.1.3 Processes and Outcomes: Integration Indicators***

As noted above, integration can be considered as both a process and an outcome, although, given its subjective nature, knowing when the outcome has been reached is difficult to assess. While this dual nature is part of the lack of conceptual clarity surrounding integration, separating the process from the outcome offers an opportunity for a better understanding of how integration can be promoted and measured for asylum seekers who have only temporary status. Many of the common indicators and domains of integration are not relevant to asylum seekers due to the restrictions they face while awaiting a decision. Integration in this temporary context must therefore be more about the process than the outcome. Without access to employment, housing or citizenship, full integration cannot be considered possible. This section therefore looks at key frameworks for integration which have been developed within the Scottish policy context, and how these fit the circumstances of asylum seekers. Both the Scottish Refugee Integration Forum (SRIF) and the Indicators of Integration (IoI) (Ager and Strang, 2004b) are discussed. The links to regeneration policy are also important as much of the funding of integration work now comes through the local community planning structures which work under the Glasgow Regeneration Outcome Agreement (ROA) (Glasgow Community Planning Partnership, 2005). The discussion of different concepts and typologies of integration in Zetter et al. (2002) highlights the different emphases that are placed on the relative instrumentality and agency of the state vis-à-vis the refugee (or in the context of this discussion, the asylum seeker). It is interesting to consider these distinctions not only in light of the restrictions placed on asylum seekers by government policy, but also

because of the differences between the reserved and devolved policy frameworks regarding integration.

The role of the SRIF was discussed earlier in Section 4.2. It was noted then that although good progress was felt to have been made on the key actions (also noted in Section 4.2), there was still uncertainty over the best methods for evaluation. The updated action plan has not yet been released, as further consultation was decided on following the May 2007 elections. During an interview at the Scottish Government (Head of Race, Religion and Refugee Integration: October 2007) it was noted that a lot of work has been undertaken on targets, indicators and outcomes. One suggestion in the 2005 progress report (Scottish Refugee Integration Forum, 2005) was to adopt the IoI. The IoI framework (Ager and Strang, 2004b), based on both a conceptual analysis, and on qualitative studies in Glasgow and London, suggests 10 domains or indicators of refugee integration, grouped around four different themes as indicated in the table below:

**Table 9: Indicators of Integration Framework**

THEME	DOMAINS
MEANS AND MARKERS	Employment, Housing, Education, Health
SOCIAL CONNECTIONS	Social bridges, Social bonds, Social links
FACILITATORS	Language and cultural knowledge, Safety and stability
FOUNDATION	Rights and citizenship

*Source:* Adapted from Ager and Strang (2004b: 13)

Each domain is also elaborated upon as follows (Ager and Strang, 2004b). ‘Means and markers’ are key areas of participation which show evidence of the achievement of things which are valued within the community and are also means to ends relevant to integration. ‘Social connections’ refers to the different social relationships and networks that help towards integration. ‘Facilitators’ are the key skills, knowledge and circumstances that help people to be engaged and secure within their communities. ‘Foundation’ refers to the principles that define what you have a right to expect from the state and other members of your community and what is expected of you. It is noted (2004b: 8) that, although the central concern of the framework is the integration of refugees, it is also of potential relevance to wider issues of social

cohesion and could, with modification, be used to consider the experiences of asylum seekers. Many of the issues discussed in Chapter 5 on promoting integration can be seen to fit into the structure outlined above, particularly the development of social bridges, social bonds and social links, but also facilitators, as reflected in the discussion of English language provision. Education is an interesting reflection of the reserved/devolved divide since, as noted in Chapter 4, although restrictions remain on asylum seekers' ability to access education, access is more open in Scotland than in the rest of the UK. The bridges, bonds and links formulation relates to a number of aspects raised previously, for example the discussion of sources of support in Section 5.2. It is an aspect that is returned to again in the discussion of the social capital framework below. The foundation of that framework, rights and citizenship is clearly restricted in its application to asylum seekers, hence the shift in focus of integration support towards social connections. Similarly to the different levels of integration support discussed in Chapter 5 (outlined in Table 7), the IoI framework demonstrates the interaction of different processes in promoting integration.

Prior to discussing the social capital framework and the question of bridges, bonds and links in more detail, there is another important aspect to measuring the integration process, namely the links with regeneration and social justice. Social capital provides an important thematic link between these two policy areas. The Scottish Executive's (2002) community regeneration statement, for example, spoke of the importance of building social capital in deprived neighbourhoods. There are two other important connections between integration and regeneration. Most asylum seekers have been housed within areas of Glasgow that suffer from problems of multiple deprivation, due to the availability of housing in such areas. Integration therefore necessarily involves dealing with the circumstances and context of such areas which are often lacking in facilities. Furthermore, integration resources from the Scottish Government are now being channelled through the Community Planning Partnerships that operate under the Regeneration Outcomes Agreement (2005) for Glasgow and have their own set of regeneration indicators with which to evaluate their work. Despite these important structural links, however, regeneration and integration do not entirely overlap, due to the specificities of both the asylum process and the problems of deprivation. Broadly speaking, regeneration is also a more

community focused process, as compared to the more individual nature of integration. Domains of deprivation include income, employment, health and disability, education, skills and training and geographical access to services (Social Disadvantage Research Centre, 2003). Clearly, not all these areas can be applied to asylum seekers. The need for flexibility was acknowledged from a community planning perspective:

*The problem is that a lot of people [benefiting from] integration resources aren't refugees, they don't have permission to work, they don't have citizenship status, they don't have citizen rights. So a lot of the indicators around regeneration, about employability, health, these indicators are a challenge because people in terms of their employability they can't work, they are ostracised and marginalised by law. Their health is profoundly affected by their status and it is understated so many times about what an impact it has to be staying in that kind of limbo for such a length of them... However, we take a kind of broad look at it and whilst we want the money ... to fit with the ROA broadly we're trying not to get too hung up on it – [we] recognise that there's a special case to be made for asylum. (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

Another interviewee suggested that links exist between integration and regeneration, not only in terms of common problems arising from social exclusion but also in connection with changing attitudes. The role of 'enlightened self-interest' was suggested (Interview: Community Development Co-ordinator, Scottish Refugee Council) as being important in overcoming the initial negativity towards asylum seekers, and there was a recognition that integration support for asylum seekers could help to improve the neighbourhood for all those living there.

The restrictions on asylum seekers tend to shape the integration process towards social connections, where indicators may relate to participation as the most easily measurable outcome. While it is important to ensure that opportunities to participate are available, they will not serve the same purpose for everybody. Ager and Strang (2004b: 6) acknowledge that the definition of integration set out by the IoI framework may represent a degree of involvement not achieved by many people within the UK regardless of their immigration status, although it does suggest a goal to work towards. There has to be a balance between the institutional structure to aid integration, and the preferences and capacities of the individual when considering integration processes and outcomes, in recognition of both the structural and subjective aspects of integration. However, although the discussion has focused on some difficulties with existing integration indicators, these difficulties arise primarily

from the restrictions of asylum seeker status rather than being inherent problems with the indicators. There is also a question of whether participation in asylum-specific initiatives relates to wider integration, a problem discussed again in terms of bridging and bonding capital. The focus on social connections draws on the terminology from the social capital literature, and is discussed further below.

## **8.2 THE SOCIAL CAPITAL FRAMEWORK**

Potential indicators and frameworks for integration have been influenced by the concept of social capital with the focus on social connections, and particularly by the language of building bridges, bonds and links. Bridges refer to connections with those who are in some way different, bonds are within a similar social group, and links refers to connections with service providers. The importance of relationships is inherent in both social capital and integration. This section draws on both empirical and theoretical material to look more closely at bridges, bonds and links, what these concepts mean, how they relate to integration and some examples from practice. The advantages and disadvantages of using a social-capital based framework for integration are considered.

### ***8.2.1 Bridges, Bonds and Links***

In general terms, social capital can be understood as the ability of individuals to secure benefits by virtue of their membership in social networks or other social structures (Portes, 1998: 6). It is intangible, representing a metaphor for the benefits from relationships, rather than any particular asset. As Leonard (2004) points out, notions of trust, community, networks and reciprocity are embedded within the concept of social capital. This broad definition of social capital has been further refined by distinguishing between the different forms of social connections. Putnam (2000: 22) argues that, of all the dimensions along which forms of social capital may vary, perhaps the most important distinction is between bridging (or inclusive) and bonding (or exclusive) capital. The distinction also corresponds to that made by

Granovetter (1973) between strong and weak ties. In both cases weak (or bridging) ties are viewed as being more useful in promoting information flows and linking to external assets, whereas bonding will provide solidarity and support. Both forms relate to different aspects of the integration process and can be related in several different ways. Putnam (2000: 23) notes, however, that many groups simultaneously bridge along some dimensions and bond along others, and although it is a distinction that should be kept in mind, the categories are not absolute. There is also an additional third aspect – links – which refers to links to government and other decision-making or service provision structures. The potential difficulties with this structure are discussed below after a discussion of how these distinctions may appear in practise. Examples of bonding activities include funding for Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs) and other asylum seeker or refugee-led initiatives. Bridging events are those which are intended to bring together members from different communities and linking may involve consultation activities such as attending integration network or SRIF meetings. Such aspects may be interrelated, for example where bonding activities provide a foundation for future bridging work. The question of bridging, bonding and linking is considered through two specific examples, community drop-ins, and the Framework for Dialogue groups, bearing in mind that such groups can serve multiple purposes.

The discussion of the drop-in groups is based on the fieldwork carried out in two of these groups based in the North Glasgow area. It is important to note that there are a number of such groups across Glasgow that vary in form and aims, and the intention is therefore not to generalise about the role of drop-ins, but to use the observation data to inform theoretical reflections on the concepts of bridging and bonding. As discussed in Section 5.2, these groups provide humanitarian assistance, links to other services and organisations, friendship and help in dealing with aspects of the asylum process such as contacting officials or explaining letters. In terms of relating integration work to the bridging/bonding/linking distinctions, there are a number of relevant points. Although all the activities are open to all, they are attended predominantly by asylum seekers and refugees living in the local area. The bridging capacity is therefore limited, and is primarily based around relationships which develop with volunteers from the receiving community. Although these often

take some time to develop, such relationships can be important sources of support for asylum seekers in dealing with the asylum process, for example through accompanied visits to the Home Office or to lawyers appointments, and in increasing the range of social contacts and helping with language skills. Volunteers are also able to learn more about asylum seekers' circumstances and cultures, as well as the general benefits of friendship. In addition to the practical assistance provided, therefore, there are some aspects of drop-in work that could be viewed in terms of supporting bridging capital. The drop-ins can also be viewed in terms of supporting bonding, however, by providing a safe meeting space for people to spend time together, both asylum seekers generally and also specific national or ethnic groups. In one location, which offers a more general social space, the largest group of regulars were women sharing a common ethnic background. The drop-in provided a space for them to get together on a regular basis, with activities provided for their children. When talking to the co-ordinator prior to commencing the fieldwork, it was commented that this was a closed group which was difficult to penetrate (field notes, November 2005). Concerns over the dominance of this group were raised by volunteers on occasion (for example: field notes November 2006), when it was felt that other people may feel put off if they come and end up sitting on their own, or the service may be undermined if there is an impression that one group gets more help. That is not to suggest that there was a bias in practice, as the aim of the organisers was to be fair and inclusive, but that indirectly supporting the bonding of a particular group raises problems which may be real or perceived. The drop-ins demonstrate both that integration activity is a broad categorisation which may mean any number of things in practice, and also that such groups can serve different functions for different people or for the same people at different times. Categorisation of such integration work along the bridging/bonding/linking spectrum is therefore not straightforward.

The second practical example of the interchangeable nature of these dimensions of social capital is the Framework for Dialogue (FFD) groups that were set up to act as bridge-building structures. According to the Scottish Refugee Council Community Development Work Strategic Review (2005), the original aim was to identify, investigate and begin to address the issues facing refugees and asylum



seekers. It was noted at the time of the strategic review, however, that because the percentage of refugees rather than asylum seekers involved was lower than initially anticipated, the issues being dealt with related more to asylum and immigration questions rather than to bridge-building and cohesion. There was, however, representation on the local integration networks and it is possible that, given the large number of families who have been given leave to remain under the legacy case review, the balance has now shifted. The question of how such groups acted in a bridging capacity was raised during an interview at the Scottish Refugee Council, which has played a key facilitating role. The ways in which such groups can play multiple purposes is again highlighted:

*They have a role in creating bonds locally and they also have a role in creating links, using that framework, into the policy process ... in some respects the links and the bridges get formed at the same time because, in all of the RSIN<sup>23</sup>, there are members of the FFD ... As well as taking issues up to those fora to be dealt with, they're forming relationships with key local people ... Secondly... some of the activities that the networks and FFDs are now doing jointly. Joint publications for example, joint pieces of work, the 'understanding each other' project in Pollock for example, is a joint piece of work between the network, the FFD group and Strathclyde police and local schools and what they're doing in a sense is bridging the understanding gap with kids... It's a mechanism through which people can be identified to go and participate in activities which are intercultural, or plan them. I would say that's how it works. (Community Development Co-ordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

The bridging/bonding/linking spectrum is therefore a useful broad categorisation to bear in mind when considering potentially different forms of support for the integration process, but integration activities are rarely so clear cut in practice, often fulfilling different functions through different aspects of their activities. It is also the case that bonding and bridging activities may face unforeseen difficulties. The potential advantages and disadvantages of this conceptualisation and of using a social capital framework for integration work are discussed below.

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<sup>23</sup> Refugee Settlement and Integration Networks

### **8.2.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of a Social Capital Based Approach**

The social capital approach has been influential in conceptualising and planning integration activities, even if the practice does not conform neatly to the three dimensions set out above. This section considers further some of the potential advantages and disadvantages of a social capital based approach, drawing both on empirical material, and on insights from the theoretical literature. The usefulness of the social capital discourse in conceptualising integration practice is noted, as well as the way in which it highlights the need for action at different levels including community and government. There are potential problems, however, in terms of participation and representation, and despite the multiple functions of the groups noted above, in moving between the different dimensions of social capital.

As indicated above, the bridges/bonds/links categorisation highlights important activities that contribute to the integration process and link into Table 9 above, in terms primarily of building social connections, but also in some cases by facilitating the building of links with agencies. Although it is more complicated in practice, and therefore requires flexibility in application, the benefits and relevance were highlighted:

*We're a number of years into implementing a community development strategy that's largely built around the social capital framework, although I have to say we don't have a slavish adherence to it, it's more of a convenient way of describing work that we were already doing because we were using community development formulations and had taken the key decisions before it was produced... I think that the social capital framework has got a lot of use, because it's quite a simple way of having this discourse... the metaphor I quite often use is about a bridge, a bridge stands on two pillars, and one of them is self organisation within a majority community and the other is self organisation within an excluded community, I think that metaphor works quite well in Glasgow. (Community Development Co-ordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

The metaphor of the bridge highlights why there is a need for both bridging and bonding activity, as well as the links with regeneration and the need for support for existing communities. Integration can take a number of forms and can be as much about providing support for one community as a foundation for engagement as it is about that engagement itself. The importance of promoting bonding activity and

supporting the building of networks amongst asylum seekers was highlighted by both asylum seekers themselves, and by service providers, as discussed in Chapter 5. The importance of relationship building is also emphasised, as social capital is primarily a relational concept, but relationships also underpin the notion of integration. Relationships are vital not only in terms of social connections, but also in understanding integration as a two-way process involving both the asylum-seeking community and the host community.

The advantages of the social capital framework are therefore not only in providing a useful discourse, but also in highlighting the inputs that are needed from different actors at different levels. The role of links indicates the importance of vertical as well as horizontal connections. Maloney et al. (2000) argue that it is misleading to focus only on grassroots activity and to overlook the role of political structures and institutions in shaping and sustaining associational activity, for example through funding. This is particularly interesting within the new structure for funding integration work in Glasgow, as discussed in Section 7.1, as the grassroots organisations have now been linked into and given a role within the political structures that plan and co-ordinate integration work within the city. This further overlap between the different aspects of social capital highlights the multi-faceted nature of the integration process, not only in defining integration but also in planning and promoting it. Input is required from a number of different actors through both horizontal and vertical relationships, as reflected in the emphasis that has been placed upon partnership working in Glasgow.

Thus far the emphasis has been on the benefits of linking a social capital based discourse and framework to integration work. Even given a flexible approach and the fact that integration work does not necessarily fit easily into one category, there are still some potentially relevant problems that have been highlighted within the critical literature on social capital. These relate primarily to problems of representation and equality, and the difficulties of transition from one form of social capital to another, which, in this context, relates to the problems that may be encountered in trying to broaden integration out beyond the spheres available to asylum seekers on the granting of leave to remain. One problem was the inherent instability of networks based around asylum seekers, which had a high turnover due

to the outcomes and pressures of the asylum system. This has now been overcome to some extent, as many of those in leadership positions within Refugee Community Organisations and networks have now been given leave to remain. Issues of equality and representation are more difficult. As asylum seekers and refugees are a very diverse group it is difficult to give meaning to the notion of representation. Leonard (2004:930) suggests that within the social capital literature, the role of leadership has been underplayed. Purdue (2001), however, uses his study of the formation of local regeneration partnerships to consider different kinds of trust relations, thereby drawing on a context that is relevant to the restructuring of integration funding in Glasgow. In the partnerships that Purdue discusses, there is a need for trust between the partnership members and also more broadly within the community, however, the dual role undertaken by community leaders in maintaining both sets of relations contains a number of difficulties. There is a question of how representative the leader is of their community and the risk that the leader becomes a gatekeeper for gaining resources for factional interests. The relations with other partner members, particularly local authorities, may also be unequal. As Purdue (2001: 2219) notes, these relations can be based on dependence rather than trust. Leaders have a vital bridging role to play, yet there are a number of constraints in place. On one side they face the problem of co-option, on the other the risk of engagement without tangible gains, both of which would harm trust. Detailed studies of local networks and community planning processes are necessary to understand how far these concerns are applicable, but the potential difficulties are clear. Griffiths et al. (2005) also highlight the problem of unequal partnership relations in terms of power, resources, and agenda setting, and note that refugee community organisations may not even be at the centre of their own communities as informal networks may be equally or more important.

In addition to the questions of leadership and representation there are also questions around inequality. Leonard's (2004) work highlights the potential inequality that can be masked within conceptualisations of bonding activity, and difficulties in using bonding as a foundation for building bridges. Based on research in Belfast, Leonard criticises the notion that bonding is necessarily inclusive at the community level and that the transition to bridging benefits the community as a

whole. The study is based on a West Belfast housing estate where strong social support networks emerged as a way of challenging the state's inability to provide for its citizens. Leonard (2004) argues that, despite these strong support networks, many social inequalities existed, and in some cases were intensified by the community's attempt to build up social capital. A focus on bonding capital can mask underlying inequalities, which can persist through efforts to emphasise more bridging activities. Portes (1998: 15-17) also highlights a number of potentially negative effects of social capital that have a bearing on the process of integration. He suggests that although strong ties bring benefits, they implicitly exclude outsiders, which is clearly problematic in terms of integration. The negative correlation between in-group and out-group trust, has been questioned recently by Putnam (2007), who suggests that the different forms of trust may vary independently. Portes further argues that there is a risk of excessive claims on group members. The difficulties of separating personal space from the demands of running a community group were noted by one refugee group leader interviewed (H, Congolese refugee). A further potential problem is the risk of what Portes describes as downward levelling norms, whereby group solidarity cements a common experience of adversity and opposition to mainstream society. There are difficulties therefore with a social capital based approach for bonding and bridging and the transition between these forms. The fact that such an approach has been applied flexibly, however, drawing also on community development principles, and that integration work often fulfils more than one purpose amongst bridging, bonding and linking, may mean that such problems remain more theoretical than practical. Nonetheless, there are some potential pitfalls when using social capital to consider asylum seeker integration. One challenge is to build on integration as an asylum seeker with all the restrictions that entails, to a more mainstream integration once leave to remain has been granted. It links back to the balance between special projects and mainstream provision for asylum seekers, discussed previously in Chapter 7, whereby too much emphasis on special projects may be counterproductive by holding people back from accessing mainstream services. Griffiths et al. (2005: 202) for example, question the evidence on the long term integrative role of RCOs, noting the possibility that such organisations may actually perpetuate marginality. Concerns over potential ghettoisation were noted by

a number of asylum seekers and service providers. Moving on when leave to remain has been granted presents a number of difficulties, such as finding suitable housing and employment. Bridging and bonding can also be applied to different dimensions of integration, bonding is represented by integrating the asylum seeker community, with help from special projects, whilst bridging is integration into the wider community and mainstream services, with additional integration indicators that look at outcomes in areas such as housing, education and employment.

When considering asylum seeker integration, and its inherent difficulties, social capital provides a useful focus on relationships and social connections that is relevant to the available indicators of integration. The bridges, bonds and links formulation also gives a strong indicator of the multifaceted nature of integration and the inputs that are needed from various different levels. But it is important not to treat social capital uncritically, as there are problems with the concept and its application. The social capital approach is useful in a number of ways, though with potential difficulties, but must be also considered within the broader institutional and policy framework. As Griffiths et al. (2005: 35) argue, social capital may be a useful complementary concept for integration, but there is a need to look at the context of resettlement and asylum policy. The approach to integration in Glasgow is now discussed further, taking into account the influence of the different policy frameworks at the Scotland and UK levels.

### **8.3 REVIEWING THE GLASGOW MODEL**

In order to round off the evaluation of integration in the Scottish context, this final section reviews the response which has developed in Glasgow, explicitly relating it to research question 2 on the problematic nature of integration and how this has been addressed in Glasgow.<sup>24</sup> Policy and practice are discussed, including the types of work undertaken and the problems encountered. There is a discussion of whether integration work in Glasgow could be considered as a ‘model’, and if so how

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<sup>24</sup> Question 2: *In what ways is integration a problematic concept and how has this been addressed in Glasgow?*

influential it has been in the face of a more hostile approach from the UK government. Finally, some implications for policy and practice are discussed.

### **8.3.1 Integration Policy and Practice**

This chapter so far has discussed conceptualisations of integration, the difficulties of the temporary context and the use of the social capital framework. The focus now shifts from the conceptual level, to a discussion focused more on integration practice. As one interviewee (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning) suggested, the whole issue of integration is not just about what organisations do about it, but about how successfully it is working. The different strands and levels of work are noted, and views on how successful such work has been are considered.

Integration policy in Scotland is based on the conviction that it is not possible to leave people entirely in limbo whilst waiting for a decision and that the integration process must begin from the day of arrival. The SRIF progress report (2005) noted that integration of asylum seekers and refugees is a two-way process which benefits host communities in Scotland as well as the new communities. As indicated earlier, in practice there have been a number of different strands to integration work, dealing with different aspects of integration such as social connections, access to services, and learning the language. The variety of work taking place has been flexible and responsive, but has also lacked coherence, which is now being addressed through a more strategic approach. An important feature of the ways in which integration work has developed is that it has taken place at a number of different levels including community work, local government initiatives and Scottish Government policy. As one interviewee commented, work has taken place at different levels not only to support integration, but also in trying to influence the broader asylum policy framework:

*If you're going to achieve change in the asylum process, I think you need people who can shout, I think you need people who can negotiate and I think you need people who can whisper. Sometimes they're the same people and sometimes they're different people at different layers. (Community Development, Co-ordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

The extent of the broader influence of the work in Glasgow on asylum policy is returned to again below. A further issue when looking back at integration policy and practice is the success of the work which has been carried out. A number of strengths and weaknesses were discussed in Section 7.3. Strengths noted were partnership working, integrating children in schools, and the work of communities. Weaknesses were childcare, legal services and dealing with destitution. A number of participants felt that, although much had been achieved in the period since dispersal began, there was still a need for further improvement. For example:

*I do think we've tried very hard for seven years. But there's much that needs to be done and there is a kind of lack of 'joined-upness', for all it's much better, I would say, here than possibly in parts of England, because Scotland is smaller and you can quickly get to the people you need to get to, so we've been able to do a lot and we've been very successful in some things, but it needs to continue and it needs to get better (ESOL provider)*

The need for improvement relates both to the specific responses in Glasgow to support integration, and also to the difficulties of the broader policy environment. Frustrations with UK asylum policy and the difficulties created for families, services, and the broader integration context were frequently noted. The removal of failed asylum seekers illustrates these points as it not only creates specific difficulties for the police, as discussed in Section 4.3.1, but also undermines integration efforts, reinforcing the difficulties of integration within a temporary context. One interviewee framed the difficulties in terms of the question of what the response from a civilised society should be for those who need help:

*There's some big issues around, as a civilised society we have expectations about how we will support and deal with each other, and some of that's laid out in the Children Act, how we support families, some of that's laid out in education directives, but then it comes to asylum seekers, at times you find that where you might give support to an indigenous Glaswegian family you shouldn't do the same for a failed asylum seeking family. And that goes against the grain of the ethos of why social work was set up and what we're aiming to do. (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council)*

Changes in the forms of support needs for asylum seekers were discussed in Chapter 6, where the shift away from humanitarian support was noted. In the drop-ins there has been a shift from humanitarian support to emotional support. From a more



strategic perspective it was also suggested that there is a need for a greater emphasis on challenging attitudes:

*I think it is in transition, however, from a phase of humanitarian responses to work that's more about changing attitudes and I think that will be quite challenging. One of the things that we're looking at doing at the moment is trying to equip some of the networks with enough of a discourse that they need to get to that debate more wholeheartedly. To a certain extent what has happened is that communities have not immersed themselves in the conflicts around definitions of integration, whether it's assimilation, interculturalism, multiculturalism, whatever. (Community Development Coordinator, Scottish Refugee Council)*

Integration policy and practice has therefore had to seek a balance between being responsive to immediate needs and finding some form of structure and coherence. Planning must retain flexibility for changes in the asylum policy. The extent to which the approach to integration policy and practice in Glasgow can be considered as a 'model' is now discussed.

### **8.3.2 Is There a 'Model'?**

Integration policy and practice is clearly diverse. In terms of using the experiences of Glasgow to reflect on the broader theoretical and policy framework of asylum and integration it is worth considering briefly whether the approach in Glasgow can be conceptualised as a 'model', with distinctive features that can be characterised in a particular way and could be replicated in a different context.

The response in Glasgow was described by one participant (Interview: COSLA Strategic Migration Partnership) as attempting to find the best solution within certain parameters, combined with the view that it has been successful. From an asylum seeker perspective (interview, A, Iraqi asylum seeker) it was noted that arriving could feel like being blindfolded and that people needed help to see their way forward. Yet within the common goal of integration, there can be a range of ways of understanding the concept and putting it into practice. During an interview with the ATLAS partnership, it was noted that all the projects they funded used their own evaluation frameworks and indicators. Whilst this allows for greater applicability to individual projects, it makes comparison difficult. There is ongoing

work to bring a greater coherence to the structure of integration work that is intended to balance the need for co-ordination with local input and variation. Some form of standardised evaluation indicators which allow for different paths to the same outcomes may aid in comparing outcomes. The more formalised structure should be able to make better use of resources and be more proactive, but it is also important not to lose the strengths of being reactive and being able to adjust to policy changes on the ground. The extent to which stakeholders in Glasgow are able to set the agenda is constrained, and responsiveness to shifts in policy is required. Rather than identifying any particular form of integration work, there are features of the structure of integration policy and practice which could be considered as characteristic of the work in Glasgow. These are a combination of a supportive political discourse from local and national government, backed up by financial input, and consisting of work that is grassroots, community-based and city-wide, with an emphasis on partnership working. The model places a strong emphasis on integration for asylum seekers, but is characterised by fluidity and an intersection of particular circumstances and structures. Its wider influence could be considered mixed, as there are a number of areas such as removals and employment rights, where it has not been possible to shift policy, but on other aspects such as the legacy review, the impact has been more positive. The issue of the extent of the influence that Glasgow has been able to have on UK policy was raised during an interview at Glasgow City Council:

*It varies, I think with the Home Office, sometimes people are naïve ... [a] naming and shaming type scenario doesn't really play. So what we've tried to do in a sense is take a line saying we will do what we do, and we will do it well. And we think we do a good job for unaccompanied asylum seekers, we think we do a good job for asylum seeking families, because our standards are actually above what the contract says. And then the legacy review, we're getting on with it and trying to get people resettled. So the Home Office tend to see us as a kind of trusted safe pair of hands who'll give a good service... So I just think that if we do a good job and we're shown to be confident and competent then we'll bring a voice to the table that the Home Office will listen to. (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council)*

The response to dispersal, and the approach taken to integration in Glasgow could therefore be considered as a model, albeit one characterised by fluidity and variation. The context is not, however, static and changes such as the legacy review or the NAM necessitate shifts in the direction of support or the provision of resources. Flexibility, underpinned by strong political support and responses at different levels

from the community through to government are therefore as important as any particular policy or practice. Although partnership working has been an important feature which could be replicated elsewhere, the devolved context has also been very important in shaping the Glasgow model, which has emerged in a very specific context. The literature review indicated some common experiences and features between Glasgow and other dispersal regions including: deprivation and poverty, difficult relations with NASS, and improvements and learning in service provision as dispersal progressed. There are, however, some features of Glasgow which stand out. As the only local authority in Scotland with a dispersal contract it did not have to deal with the additional complications of regional co-ordination, as well as national co-ordination with the Home Office. Housing has also been almost entirely provided through Glasgow Housing Association, with only one private housing agency given 10% of provision in the post 2005 contract. As a result there have not been the same issues with standards of housing and services from private landlords. Glasgow also housed a high proportion of families, and the positive role of schools in promoting integration has been noted in this thesis. Griffiths et al. (2005, p.127) highlight the impact of specific configuration of local factors in dispersal impact and arrangements. In this regard the devolved context has allowed greater flexibility and support in some aspects of service provision for asylum seekers.

### ***8.3.3 Implications for Policy and Practice***

Evaluating integration in the Scottish context, together with the different aspects considered in the earlier chapters, raises (or reemphasises) issues with implications for policy and practice. These relate to the provision of information, understanding integration, the implications of the way that integration has been undertaken, and changes in policy. Areas for further research are highlighted in the concluding chapter.

Access to information is important with respect to a number of different issues. The introduction of the NAM, with faster decision-making, has re-emphasised the importance of getting information on who is arriving in the city to service providers and information on services and resources to asylum seekers. It becomes

particularly pertinent when people receive very quick positive decisions and have a short space of time to access new systems of housing and social security. As discussed in Section 6.3, the immediate period after receiving a positive decision can be more difficult than anticipated, and requires considerable help and support. The issue has been highlighted not only by the faster decisions under the NAM, but also by the large number of positive decisions received during the early stages of the legacy case review, and an awareness of the demands on support services was expressed by several participants.

Information provision is important not only in terms of linking asylum seekers and service providers, but also in terms of changing attitudes. Changing attitudes and challenging misperceptions about asylum seekers have been an important part of integration work from the start, and as suggested above, there may now be an increased focus on this type of work. One perspective on the role of information in changing attitudes was the importance of clarity of expectations:

*It's about setting a course of rules and expectations that the indigenous population can live with and understand, and also [that] the new communities ... can understand and then make choices about. And if they make a certain choice then there are consequences that follow. And sometimes it's about understanding [cultural differences] (Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council)*

There are also a number of issues that relate to understandings of integration. Returning to issues of equality and representation, Korac (2003:53) suggests that conceptual problems with integration extend beyond theory to the question of who is defining the term. To an extent the issue is being addressed through the formalisation of the role of integration networks, and the involvement of the Framework for Dialogue groups in the planning and funding process. As discussed earlier, however, issues of leadership and representation within a group as diverse as asylum seekers are complex. It is possible that there may be issues which have been subsumed under the exigencies of dealing with the asylum process that may need further consideration. It was noted during an interview at the Scottish Government (Interview: Head of Race, Religion, and Refugee Integration), that there can be tensions around gender, faith, race and sexual orientation. It was suggested that, in addition to language, cultural knowledge on how to live in this society is also required, which links back to the importance of clarity of expectations.

There are also implications for policy and practice in terms of the process and outcome distinction discussed earlier. Beginning integration support from the day of arrival overcomes some of the challenges of the limbo while waiting for a decision. Yet being integrated as an asylum seeker is only the beginning of the process of integration. As one interviewee commented it is a very artificial context:

*They can't work, they can't go and do their own thing and have the joys and hassles and pressures ...they don't have a tenancy. So whilst their rights are denied in some senses they're liberated from some responsibilities. It's a very artificial position to be in to be honest. But people have got a bit more time and start to really embed themselves in integration processes and also I think they're committed too, I think they're just a very committed group of people ... and they want safer communities for themselves and for their children. ... If they get refugee status people are then sometimes sick of the process, they want to maybe not be quite as noted for their status, as for their humanity and want to get on with their lives which is totally understandable. (Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning)*

There are therefore challenges for policy and practice in maintaining integration support through to the point of decision and beyond. The legacy review and the NAM have changed the context of integration work, and the discussion reinforces the already existing awareness of the potential need to refocus resources towards refugees in some areas, and continue work on mainstreaming. There should be awareness that, although the categories are not absolute, the different forms of social capital can potentially undermine and contradict each other. The implications for policy and practice are looked at again in the Chapter 9, when further issues for research are discussed.

## **CONCLUSION**

Integration is a difficult issue, both conceptually and practically, and when evaluating it within the Scottish asylum context it is further complicated by its potentially temporary nature. Many commonly used integration indicators, particularly those relating to public outcomes such as employment and housing, are not relevant due to the restrictions of asylum policy. It is argued that the potentially confusing dual nature of integration as both a process and an outcome is in fact helpful in this context as the focus can only be on beginning the integration process

and those aspects of integration that are available to asylum seekers, primarily social connections and building links with service providers and policy makers. There are some potential difficulties, however, not only in finding useful indicators, but in using this approach to integration as a foundation for future integration as there are still challenges on moving into mainstream society. In this case, channelling integration funds through regeneration partnerships, despite the shortcomings of regeneration indicators for integration, is useful in focusing on the common underlying issues of social exclusion. The social capital based framework is also prominent and its advantages and disadvantages were discussed. Its usefulness as a discourse was acknowledged while noting the potential theoretical and practical difficulties. Finally, the Glasgow approach to integration was reviewed suggesting that if there is a model then it can be characterised by fluidity and the interaction of a range of actors at different levels. All of these issues raise a number of implications for policy and practice, many of which are already being acted upon, in regards to information provision, understandings of integration, and anticipating future issues. Overall, the approach to integration in Scotland has responded well to a difficult policy environment. The overall findings and suggestions for further research are discussed in the concluding chapter.

## 9. CONCLUSION

This thesis has analysed the processes of dispersal and integration within Glasgow. The analysis was based around three key analytical themes: the impact of policy on target groups and stakeholders, defining and promoting integration, and challenges. The analysis has covered reserved policy in a devolved context; promoting integration; dealing with the asylum process; the challenges of old problems and new contexts, and evaluating integration in the Scottish context. This concluding chapter summarises the key findings from the research, discusses the extent to which the data collected answers the original research questions, considers the research as a learning process, (from a methodological as well as theoretical and empirical perspectives) and sets out some issues for further research.

### 9.1 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

As indicated in the Introduction, and discussed in Chapter 3, the research was based around three research questions on the experiences of dispersal, the problems of integration and the usefulness of social capital. This section discusses each question in turn, considering the material gathered in relation to each question, and then summarises with an overall indication of how far the research answered the original research questions.

1. *What are the experiences of those living and working in dispersal areas within Glasgow and how do these enable us to evaluate asylum policy?*

This question was intended to bring an understanding of how asylum policy was implemented and experienced at the local level. Dispersal policy deals with a vulnerable group faced with a difficult legal process, and context is crucial in shaping the impacts of the dispersal experience. Dispersal also affects those providing services within the dispersal areas and working within policy and strategic

roles. In response to this question there are a number of aspects of the analysis that are important to restate here.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the research pointed to tensions between devolved and reserved responsibilities in relation to dispersal, as immigration is a reserved matter, but many services provided to asylum seekers, such as health and education, are under devolved control. The overall approach in Scotland differs from that at the UK level as there is a more inclusive approach in Scotland, focusing on integration from the day of arrival rather than from the day when leave to remain is granted. The research found that, although stakeholders felt that good progress had been made in supporting asylum seekers since dispersal began, these differences could create frustration for those working within devolved services, as they often had to deal with changes beyond their own control. There can also be difficulties for different aspects of work within the same service, for example the police, whose presence at dawn raids can cause problems in terms of building relationships in the community.

Asylum policy is also dynamic; there have been several recent changes in policy and process, such as the new accommodation contract, the introduction of the New Asylum Model (NAM) and the legacy case review. These changes present constant challenges for asylum seekers and for service providers. As discussed in Chapter 6, changes in policy, and moving to different stages of the asylum process, led to changing needs and forms of support. Those working in drop-ins commented on a shift from practical support in the early stages of dispersal, when there were a large number of arrivals of people with few possessions, towards emotional support as people near the end of the asylum process and face the prospect of return. The new contract has also resulted in asylum seekers being housed more widely across the city and requires new arrangements for partnership working. Continuing adjustments are required as contexts and procedures change, such as helping people deal with the legacy case review process.

These aspects highlight the complexities of asylum policy and the difficulties it creates for all those involved. A number of problems with the policy were noted, such as the difficulties created by long waiting periods, the enforced limbo of asylum, and strategic working relations. Some of these concerns are being addressed through changes such as the faster and closer case management brought in by the



NAM, but concerns still remain over access to due process and support services. All of these policy-related factors shape the context and possibilities for integration.

2. *In what ways is integration a problematic concept and how has this been addressed in Glasgow?*

Integration is difficult to achieve in practical terms, and problematic to understand conceptually. This question was intended to address the ways in which it has been defined and conceptualised, and how the process has been facilitated in Glasgow.

Integration is conceptually difficult due to the lack of a clear generally accepted definition. Nonetheless there are some commonalities in conceptualisations of integration; particularly that integration is a two-way process that combines subjective relational aspects, and public outcomes such as employment, health, housing and education. It is challenging in a practical sense because of its subjective nature and because of the number of hurdles which typically have to be overcome in achieving goals, such as language acquisition and qualifications. Fostering integration within a temporary context and promoting it for asylum seekers is both beneficial and extremely challenging. It is beneficial as it helps begin the integration process and overcome the challenges of limbo, and contributes to the promotion of stronger community relations. Yet not all asylum seekers' claims will be recognised and therefore not all of those who are involved in the integration process will remain on a long-term basis. These difficulties were discussed in more depth in Chapter 8. There are also challenges of how far and in what ways temporary integration can be measured, as there are restrictions on asylum seekers' activities: employment is prohibited and, for those who are dispersed, there is no choice over housing. Many commonly used indicators are therefore not appropriate, and the focus tends to shift to indicators that look more at aspects of participation, often drawing on the concept of social capital. While these measurable aspects of participation are important in the integration process, and may form a foundation for continuing integration if leave to remain is received, not everyone will be interested or able to access these types of activities. Provision of opportunity, however, remains important.

A number of different practical approaches have been taken in Glasgow as discussed in Chapter 5 and in Chapter 8. These have included the development of

community-based support, such as drop-in centres, additional funding for English language support, and the development of structures, such as the Framework for Dialogue groups and the Refugee Policy Forum, to facilitate communication between asylum seekers and key stakeholders and to promote involvement in the policy-making process. Different routes to integration such as the drop-ins, language acquisition and user involvement in services were discussed in Chapter 5. It was noted that these routes can often be multi-functional, for example English classes not only improve language skills, but also have a social function, and likewise drop-ins have not only a social function, but are also a means of linking people to other services. Yet each route discussed also has limitations resulting from the pressures of the asylum system, the constraints of funding and the difficulties of provision. It has been emphasised throughout that integration is a multifaceted process with a number of levels including, the macro level of policy, the meso level of support structures and the micro level of personal attributes and preferences. While examples of each level have been considered, it should also be noted that there are also a range of potential integration strategies in addition to those which have been discussed in this thesis, for example involving sporting, cultural or leisure activities.

The difficulties of integration have been a theme throughout this thesis, but the progress which has been made in Glasgow, on the basis of strong commitment and funding, has also been noted. The difficulties arise from understanding what integration means, and how it can best be put into practice. Practice-related debates have formed the basis of a shift to a more strategic platform for integration work as discussed in Chapter 7. A number of responses were found in Glasgow, but it remains a complex and debated topic.

### *3. Are concepts such as social capital a useful tool in analysing asylum dispersal and community relations?*

The prominence of social capital in the literature on integration and asylum makes critical analysis important. In terms of this question the focus was more on integration than on community relations. Although these are broadly similar in many respects, integration also refers to links with broader structures and services as well as relations within the community. The difference also reflects shifts in policy and

discourse as community relations were more a focus of the earlier and in some ways more problematic stages of the dispersal process. In order to answer this question a critical review of the relevant areas of the social capital literature was carried out, which formed the basis for the analysis of the social capital approach in Chapter 8. The specific use of social capital terms in integration frameworks such as the Indicators of Integration (Ager and Strang, 2004b) was also analysed, along with the uses in interviews of terms relevant to social capital such as networks, bridging, bonding and linking.

The prominence of social capital in the integration literature is reflected in the structures that have been set up to facilitate the processes of integration and dispersal within Glasgow. There are local integration networks, and the Framework for Dialogue groups that are intended to facilitate bridging. There was also an emphasis in some interviews on the need for networks to support the integration process and support networks were observed during the work at drop-ins. As social capital is used both directly and indirectly as a frame of reference, it is clearly relevant to integration. It is also useful in focusing on relationships, which form a core part of the process of integration. The distinction between bridges, bonds and links also helps to highlight the way that action on integration is needed at different levels; individual, community and government. Even with the type of flexible approach that has been taken in Glasgow, however, there are some difficulties with the concept of social capital. The boundaries between the different forms of capital are not always clear, and even where they can be distinguished, using one as a basis for another, for example, bonding as a foundation for bridging, is not unproblematic. Chapter 8 also highlighted the fact that issues such as representation, leadership and partnership working are not straightforward. Therefore, while social capital is a useful concept there is a risk that its usage may mask issues of inequality and exclusion, although this is an area on which further research is needed. In addition, the fundamental difficulties of the asylum process remain.

Overall, how far has the work answered the original research questions? The experiences of different groups, asylum seekers, service providers and policy makers, highlight the difficulties that are encountered with dispersal and the asylum process.

The information on dealing with the asylum process and the tensions between reserved and devolved processes allowed a number of issues to be brought out in evaluating the policy. Problems relating to integration have been noted and a range of responses to these have been discussed, considering also how these have developed over time. Social capital was difficult to operationalise through the methods employed in this study, and the third question has perhaps the least full answer, but the advantages and disadvantages were considered and its usefulness as a discourse noted. Overall, the research has provided breadth and depth in relation to these questions, but the answers raise new questions, which are discussed further below after a brief consideration of the research as a learning process.

## **9.2 RESEARCH AS A LEARNING PROCESS**

The findings of the research in relation to the three research questions were summarised above, yet the research can be considered as a learning process not only in relation to answering research questions, but also learning about the process of research and the choices made. This section looks again at what was learnt from the research, this time in terms of what has been learnt empirically, theoretically, in relation to policy and practice, and in terms of research design and methods. On this basis the significance and limitations of the research are then commented upon.

The theoretical and empirical findings have already been summarised, and are therefore noted here briefly. The empirical findings consist of a range of experiences of the dispersal process, and the impacts of policy, understandings of what integration is and how it can be facilitated, changes that have occurred since dispersal began, and challenges which remain or which have arisen. A8 migration has contributed to a shift away from a specific focus on asylum, to the broader issues of migration. This brings challenges not only in terms of resources, but also in maintaining awareness of the distinctiveness of asylum. In theoretical terms the research looked at existing concepts and frameworks for integration and how these might apply in a context of temporary integration. The difficulties of analysing policy using frameworks in use by practitioners and policymakers, as well as social

scientists, are returned to below. The applications of social capital within the asylum and integration context were also noted, again taking account of the issues of temporary status and a number of advantages and disadvantages were discussed. The difficulties in trying to specifically promote one form of bridging, bonding or linking capital or in making transitions between them were discussed.

Research as a learning process can also be considered from the perspective of what others can learn from the research. A number of implications have been noted in terms of policy and practice, as discussed in Section 8.3. These issues relate to the provision of information, understandings of integration and how it is facilitated, and changes in policy. Each of these is important for a number of reasons. Information is important not only in understanding the asylum process, particularly with changes in services, but also in accessing services and influencing attitudes and expectations. The distinction between integration as a process and an outcome also has implications, as there are challenges in maintaining the integration process after leave to remain is granted and new issues have to be dealt with. Changes in policy such as the introduction of the New Asylum Model and the legacy review have changed the context for dispersal and integration. These changes may lead to a need for a refocusing of resources, ongoing work on mainstreaming and continuing adjustment of services. The main findings are restated again in the final summary.

It is also important to reflect on what has been learnt about research design and practice from the process of carrying out the research, as discussed in more depth in Chapter 3. As using NVivo was found to be helpful in terms of both organisation and analysis, in future I would build this in as a tool from the beginning of the research. In general terms, it is also now much clearer how long different aspects of qualitative research can take, and the need to be prepared to try a number of avenues when accessing hard-to-reach populations. For future research I would begin access efforts earlier in the research process, I would also try to be wary of assumptions about the ways in which the different stages of the research might facilitate each other, as changing roles from participant observer to interviewer within the drop-in proved difficult. That is not to say that different aspects of the research were not mutually beneficial as regards access, but not always as anticipated.

On the basis of the findings outlined above and in relation to the research questions, and comments above, and having acknowledged limitations, what can be said about the significance of this research? It looks at asylum within a Scottish context, and takes account of views and experiences from community, service provision and strategic levels. Asylum policy usefully illustrates the intergovernmental tensions that can arise when implementing reserved policies within Scotland. There is analysis of the multifaceted nature of integration, the ways in which it can be defined and promoted and the difficulties inherent in temporary integration. The dual nature of integration as both a process and an outcome is used to try and address some of the paradoxes of integration in a temporary context. The usefulness of social capital is also analysed. In such a fluid and fast-moving policy environment, such research can only offer a snapshot of a particular point in a process which may have since moved on. The limitations of a small-scale study must also be acknowledged, and the difficulties of accessing a hard-to-reach and diverse population limit the possibilities of generalisation. As mentioned above, there are also difficulties in developing a policy critique when policy makers are using the same social scientific terms that are deployed in the research, as is the case in terms of integration policy and practice analysed in this research. The difficulties of maintaining a critical distance are furthered when the perspectives and experiences of policymakers and practitioners themselves are a crucial source of data. Attempts were made during the course of this research to overcome these difficulties by drawing on material from a range of perspectives from both grassroots and strategic levels. However, the views of policymakers come across more strongly in the thesis and more emphasis on asylum seekers' perspectives (whilst acknowledging the access difficulties discussed in Chapter 3), would go some way towards dealing with this issue. A comparative research design, rather than a single case study, may also have advantages in this regard by being able to compare and contrast different integration practices.

Nonetheless, the research makes both an empirical and theoretical contribution. Empirically, it builds on the knowledge of the impact of asylum and dispersal policy, considering how its effects are shaped by implementation within a devolved context that takes a more inclusive approach than the UK government to

supporting asylum seekers. In theoretical terms, it adds to the conceptual debates on integration by examining its applications to asylum seekers, and the implications of temporary status for integration as a process and an outcome.

### **9.3 FURTHER RESEARCH**

This research added to the knowledge of the impacts of dispersal and asylum policy, balancing devolved and reserved policy responsibilities, and the debates on integration, and particularly how it can be applied within a temporary context. Yet it is also clear that issues have emerged which could not be addressed within the context of this research whether due to timing or scope. These issues relate to changes in both policies and structures.

Two recent policy changes are particularly significant, the introduction of the NAM which applies to all new asylum applications since March 2007 and the corresponding legacy case review. The NAM aims to both speed up and more closely manage the asylum decision-making process. While this is clearly beneficial to those going through the application process, there are also other implications. Faster decisions will mean a higher turnover of people passing through dispersal areas, which may have implications for integration as well as ensuring that people have the opportunity to access information and support structures to assist them while they are waiting and once they have received a decision. Concerns were also raised regarding access to legal advice whilst claims are being processed. While these issues of concern were noted in the thesis, particularly in Chapter 4, as the changes were brought in towards the end of the research the analysis was necessarily preliminary and ongoing research is necessary for understanding the longer term implications of the NAM.

Alongside the NAM, the case resolution programme, or legacy case review, was brought in to deal with the backlog of unresolved cases. In its initial stages this has resulted in a high number of positive decisions. As noted in Chapter 4, in October 2007 the Cross Party Group on Asylum Seekers and Refugees in the Scottish Parliament noted that by March 2008, 800 families would have been through

this process, of whom 80-90% were likely to receive a positive decision (Cross Party Group on Asylum Seekers and Refugees, 2007). While in the short term this has put pressure on services designed to help people once they have received status, there are also longer-term issues of how many families choose to remain in Glasgow, what influences this decision and the ongoing processes of integration now that leave to remain has been granted. At the strategic level this may mean shifts in resources and funding towards refugee integration and individual decision-making will also play a role. If the NAM is able to achieve its targets on decision-making times (which some stakeholders expressed doubt over), it is possible that the differences between the Scottish and UK contexts may become diluted, although differences will remain due to devolved service implementation and the desire of the Scottish Government to encourage inward migration. Further research would be valuable on all of these processes, and understanding these changes from the perspectives of asylum seekers and refugees is a valuable counterpoint to the experiences of policymakers and practitioners.

Recent changes in funding and integration strategy, which at the time of the research were still in the implementation process, also require more research. The channelling of money through the local community planning partnerships and attempts to move to programmes rather than projects for integration are significant changes. There are a number of angles of interest which could be followed up, including the dynamics of partnership working and the involvement of asylum seekers and refugees, the integration goals pursued and the outcomes of the changes in strategy and how these are evaluated. New challenges continue to arise for integration work, including changes in context such as that brought about by A8 migration, and changes in asylum policy and process. All of these changes have implications for integration policy and practice and for conceptual debates on integration.



## 9.4 FINAL SUMMARY

This research analysed asylum and dispersal policies within the local context of Glasgow. As the largest location for dispersal in the UK, and the only one within Scotland, experiences from within Glasgow have much to tell us about responses to dispersal, particularly from the early problems that have been overcome and the positive approach that has been taken to integration. Using participant observation with community groups carrying out integration work, analysis of minutes and policy documents, and interviews with asylum seekers, service providers and policy makers, this thesis has examined the impacts of the policy, the responses to the challenges of integration and the uses of a social capital based framework. In relation to these analytic themes, as outlined above, the main findings are: the tensions between devolved and reserved responsibilities relating to asylum seekers; the changing support needs of asylum seekers since dispersal began; the multi-faceted nature of integration and the moves to a more strategic approach in facilitating it; the new challenges of A8 migration and the need for a more multicultural approach to integration; and the paradoxes of integration within a temporary context. While the asylum process creates particular difficulties, often the problems encountered in dispersal are existing issues of service provision that are exacerbated within the context of asylum. Overall, the responses to dispersal and asylum in Glasgow have highlighted the importance of a multi-level, partnership-based, flexible approach as asylum presents challenges for individuals, communities, service providers and policy makers. As discussed in Section 8.3.2, although Glasgow shared some common features with other dispersal locations including some features of the accommodation contract and problems of deprivation, the devolved context has shaped the dispersal arrangements and response in the city. A considerable amount of progress has been made since dispersal began, but policies and procedures continue to change, changing the context for integration work and bringing fresh challenges.

As asylum policy and dispersal are topical political issues there are a number of potential audiences for this research including service providers and users, policy makers and academic researchers. What can the research offer for these different audiences? For service providers and users the research provides an assessment of

some of strengths and weakness of asylum support overall, and for different routes to integration. There is also discussion of forms of support for the integration process and some of the challenges that are faced. For those in policy and strategic roles the research adds to the work on the impact of asylum in Scotland, and highlights issues of ongoing importance such as the provision of information and access to services, and new challenges arising from changes in policy and shifts towards a broader perspective on migration, of which asylum will form only one part. In academic terms the research adds to debates around the meaning of integration by examining it within a temporary context, and analyses the advantages and disadvantages of using a social capital based framework.

This is a small-scale study that offers a snapshot of the responses to the issues created by asylum policy and dispersal in Glasgow. Making use of participant observation, interviews and documentary analysis, the research uses some of the wide range of responses and experiences of dispersal in Glasgow to highlight the reserved/devolved policy tensions, examine ways of dealing with the asylum process and analyse the challenges of defining and promoting integration within a temporary context.

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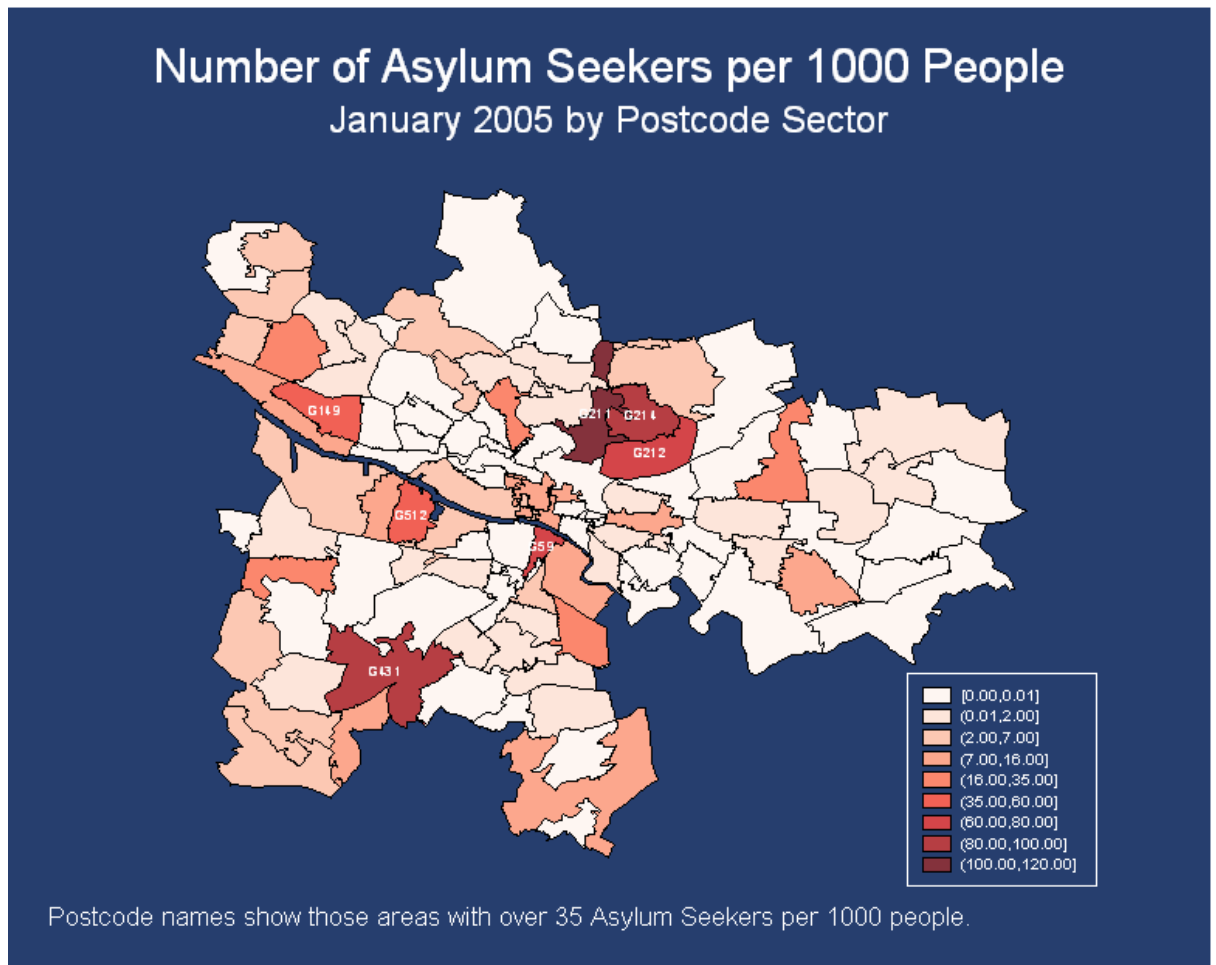
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## **APPENDICES**

1. Distribution of asylum seekers in Glasgow, 2005
2. Use of Sources
3. PhD Research Summary
4. Generic interview request letter
5. Master service provider topic guide
6. Sample asylum seeker interview schedule

## Appendix 1: Distribution of asylum seekers in Glasgow, 2005



Source: CRASC Asylum Statistics: Number of asylum seekers living in Glasgow at 02.01.05.  
(COSLA Refugee and Asylum Seekers Consortium, 2005)

## Appendix 2: Use of Sources

NAME	OVERALL NUMBER OF USES	USES PER CHAPTER	SOURCE
Community Group Co-ordinator Balornock,	9	Chapter 4: 1 Chapter 5: 3 Chapter 6: 3 Chapter 7: 2	interview
Community Group Co-ordinator, Sighthill	6	Chapter 5: 3 Chapter 6: 3	interview
Head of Race Religion and Refugee Integration, Scottish Government	14	Chapter 4: 5 Chapter 5: 3 Chapter 7: 4 Chapter 8: 2	interview
Policy Officer, ATLAS	5	Chapter 4: 1 Chapter 5: 2 Chapter 7: 2	interview
Consortium Manager, COSLA SMP	5	Chapter 4: 2 Chapter 7: 2 Chapter 8: 1	interview
Area Manager, Glasgow Community Planning	16	Chapter 4: 3 Chapter 5: 1 Chapter 7: 9 Chapter 8: 3	interview
ESOL Provider	12	Chapter 4: 1 Chapter 5: 4 Chapter 6: 1 Chapter 7: 4 Chapter 8: 2	interview
Education Provider	19	Chapter 4: 8 Chapter 5: 2 Chapter 6: 4 Chapter 7: 5	interview
Regional Manager, BIA, Scotland	6	Chapter 4: 4 Chapter 6: 1 Chapter 7: 1	interview
Chief Inspector Strathclyde Police	17	Chapter 4: 8 Chapter 5: 3 Chapter 7: 5 Chapter 8: 1	interview
Community Development Co- ordinator Scottish	15	Chapter 4: 1 Chapter 6: 4 Chapter 7: 5	interview

Refugee Council		Chapter 8: 5	
Head of Immigration and Emergency Services, Glasgow City Council	12	Chapter 4: 1 Chapter 6: 2 Chapter 7: 5 Chapter 8: 4	interview
N, Algerian asylum seeker	8	Chapter 5: 2 Chapter 6: 6	interview
S, Iraqi asylum seeker	1	Chapter 5: 1	interview
A, Iraqi asylum seeker	9	Chapter 5: 5 Chapter 6: 1 Chapter 8: 2	interview
H, Congolese Refugee	15	Chapter 5: 9 Chapter 6: 5 Chapter 8: 1	interview
S, Iranian Asylum seeker	1	Chapter 5: 1	field notes
O, Angolan asylum seeker	1	Chapter 5: 1	field notes
B. Turkish asylum seeker	1	Chapter 5: 1	field notes
A, Algerian asylum seeker	3	Chapter 5: 2 Chapter 6: 1	field notes
F, Sri Lankan asylum seeker	1	Chapter 5: 1	field notes
M, Iranian asylum seeker	1	Chapter 6: 1	fieldnotes

## **Appendix 3: Research Information Summary (2007 version)**

### **PhD RESEARCH INTO ASYLUM SEEKER INTEGRATION IN GLASGOW**

Alexandra Rosenberg – Social Policy, University of Edinburgh.

#### **SUMMARY**

The research examines experiences of dispersal in Glasgow, focusing on support and relations within local communities as well as service provision. It will draw on as wide a range of perspectives as possible in order to produce a balanced account that will be used to evaluate policy. The research methods include participant observation, interviews and the use of documents.

#### **BACKGROUND**

This research extends and expands my previous research carried out for an MSc by research in social policy. It builds on recent research carried out in Glasgow and the UK such as the work by Wren (2004) on local resettlement networks, and Ager and Strang (2004) on experiences of integration.

#### **AIMS OF THE RESEARCH**

The research aims to examine the implementation of dispersal policy, analyse the barriers to supporting asylum seekers within the community and evaluate the usefulness of concepts such as social capital and integration in understanding these areas. The intention is that the research will be able to contribute to an understanding of good practice, be able to make policy recommendations and further the debate on asylum issues.

#### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The research is focused around a set of three key questions:

- What are the experiences of those living and working in the dispersal areas of Glasgow and how do these enable us to evaluate policy?

This question addresses the experiences of asylum seekers and those working with them, and aims to take account of as broad a range of experiences as possible. It will consider both individual organisations and experiences, and broader networks.

- In what ways is integration a problematic concept and how has this been addressed in Glasgow?

Integration is a commonly used term, but one with different definitions and meanings for different people and groups. This question aims to address integration in both theory and practice by discussing people's

understandings of integration and how it should be achieved. It will take into account the policy frameworks and views in dispersal communities. The research will also consider the issues of promoting integration in a context where people have yet to receive leave to remain.

- Are concepts such as social capital a useful tool in analysing asylum dispersal and community relations?

The concept of social capital, and particularly the notion of creating bridges, bonds and links, has been prominent in recent work on refugee and asylum policy. The research will review and build on this work and consider whether there are any more useful alternative explanations or concepts.

## **DATA COLLECTION**

The research will be carried out through

- Observation of and participation in voluntary group activities
- Interviews
- The analysis of documents

The documentary analysis includes policy documents, strategic reviews and annual reports. The period December 2005 – March 2007 was spent working with voluntary groups supporting asylum seekers in North Glasgow. A series of interviews with asylum seekers and other stakeholders has been ongoing since March 2007. Emerging findings are focused around three themes: the impact of policy on target groups and stakeholders, defining and promoting integration and challenges.

## **ACADEMIC SUPERVISORS**

This research is being carried out in the School of Social and Political Studies at the University of Edinburgh and has undergone a process of ethical review. It is supervised by Professor Mike Adler of the Social Policy Dept and Professor Tony Good of Social Anthropology.

## **CONTACT DETAILS**

I am happy to discuss any aspect of the research process further and can be contacted in the following ways

Telephone:

Office 0131 650 3920

Mobile 07813 089 498

Email: [A.K.Rosenberg@sms.ed.ac.uk](mailto:A.K.Rosenberg@sms.ed.ac.uk)



## **Appendix 4: Generic interview request letter**

Dear ,

I am carrying out PhD research at Edinburgh University on asylum seeker dispersal and integration in Glasgow. A summary information leaflet of the project has been attached. I am particularly interested in how integration is defined and promoted for asylum seekers and the experiences of all those involved in the integration process.

Having spent a year doing voluntary work with asylum seekers I am now intending to carry out a series of interviews with those involved in policy and service provision. Due to your experience with dispersal policy I would value the opportunity to meet with you.

I am currently carrying out interviews and I would be happy to meet you on the day and time that you find most convenient. The interview would take around forty minutes. All information will be confidential other than for the purposes of academic research and dissemination.

I very much hope that you will agree to be interviewed and look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely

Alexandra Rosenberg

## Appendix 5: Master Service Provider/Policy Topic Guide

Permission to record

1. How would you assess the current situation?
  - What challenges are you facing?
2. What do you understand by integration?
  - What does that mean in practice and how well do you think it is working?
  - How do you think you can best support those who only have temporary leave to remain? And within a national context which has different goals?
  - How useful do you find the concepts of bridges, bonds and links?
3. How well do you think that service providers are meeting asylum seekers needs?
  - What gaps remain?
  - And also the needs of the local population?
4. The consortium brings together a number of different interests – how are these balanced?
5. How does your organisation link into other Scottish or UK wide structures?
  - Refugee policy forum
  - other connections and partnership working
6. What about the process of managing reserved policies within a devolved context?
  - how far are the different interests of Scotland taken into account?
  - Impact of increased regionalisation of IND
7. Destitution is a currently a major concern – what are the strategies for dealing with this?
8. How is A8 migration affecting your work?
9. There have been quite a number of policy changes in last few years – what ones would you say have had the most impact?

10. What do you think have been the main changes that have taken place at local level ?
  - How are such changes measured?
11. Although it is still in the very early stages how do you think the new asylum contract is working so far?
  - Views on the new housing providers?
  - Impact of the regeneration programme?
  - Any new areas – and how working out?
  - Impact on community cohesion
  - Able to assess implementation of NAM?
12. How far do you think that asylum policy has been mainstreamed or linked into other policy areas? e.g. equalities, regeneration
13. How far do you undertake consultative work with asylum seekers or refugees or use representative groups?
  - Other representation
  - How decide what groups engage with?
  - What about newer campaign groups that have emerged?
14. How would you assess public understanding of asylum issues
  - How far has it changed/improved?
  - What remains to be done?
  - Media Strategy
15. What impact do you think the large number of legacy cases is having?
  - impacts on service provision, anticipated outcomes, problems created
16. How well are information needs being met for asylum seekers/local communities/service providers?
17. What do you think of the rise of direct action in protesting against housing moves and dawn raids?
18. Promotion of community cohesion – how far have strategy and indicators been developed?
19. Funding – how do you decide on what projects to fund

- factors taken into consideration, monitoring, evaluation, goals.

20. What are your priority issues/goals for the future?

21. Is there anyone else that you would recommend speaking to?

## Appendix 6: Sample Asylum Seeker Interview Schedule

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE: (v2A)

Thanks for agreeing to talk to me. Your name won't be used and you don't have to talk about anything you don't want to. I am interested in your views and experiences of living in Glasgow.

#### *Permission to record*

- Tell me about when you first arrived in Glasgow
  - and what is your life like in Glasgow now? Views of Glasgow and of the neighbourhood. Language
- When you arrived - or now – if you have any questions who helps you to find out about things? What organisations or places have you found helpful? Do you find it easy to find things out?
- Involvement in groups? How, when, numbers, activities purpose? How helped? links
- Spending time - activities involved in, places go?
- Meeting people? – Scottish people. What does integration mean to you? What would help?
- Process of waiting?
- Experience of other family members
- What else would be useful? To know about Glasgow, or to learn, or to do or with children?
- If you get a positive decision – what do you think you will do? Stay here?
- Anything else you would like to say or any other comments?

*Thanks and any suggestions for anyone else who might want to talk*